

BOSTON COLLEGE

FALL 2011

MAGAZINE



ONE MAN'S TREASURE

A 31-year-old alumnus holds the world's second largest collection of Boston College memorabilia



BOSTON COLLEGE

PROLOGUE

THE HEART OF THINGS

I have been delving recently in a sturdy, white cardboard box labeled BOSTON COLLEGE POSTCARDS. The illustrated cards, along with their ink and pencil messages, are part of the mass of Boston College ephemera (it's an archivist's term of art, not my judgment) that is the subject of our cover story, including scrapbooks with pasted-in admission letters from 1937 and required reading lists from 1938, programs marking forgotten award dinners, and tickets (both real and fraudulent) to a Led Zeppelin-headlined concert in Alumni Stadium that never happened.

However ephemeral the postcards are technically (or in fact), they convey history. Most were published by commercial firms during the first three decades of the 20th century, when picture postcards were to personal communication what the tweet or Facebook posting is today, a quick, cheap (1 cent) means of sending a status announcement (e.g., I'm in Boston and I miss you; the ship went down but I survived).

By mid-century, the home telephone had become sufficiently ubiquitous as to usurp the postcard's place as a means of sending quick word down the road (local postcards were often delivered within 24 hours), though Boston College produced picture cards of its buildings and vistas in great numbers until early in the 1960s. Unlike the pre-war cards, the later issues were seldom stamped and sent to deliver a message. They were souvenirs; they went into a dresser or desk drawer, and from there into a cardboard box, and from there into the pile of cardboard boxes comprising part of an estate.

The early card illustrations are the most evocative, naturally: the odd, stiff demeanor Gasson Hall offered in formal photographs made shortly after it was completed, when it stood alone atop the hill, unkempt fields sloping off on every side, a baronial mansion whose owners had fallen to hard times or a deadly fever or the French Revolution; the graceful, formal bearing presented by St. Mary's Hall, the Jesuit residence and Boston College's second building, back when it featured a walled-in cloister walk at the rear of its private garden, before Jesuits required personal cars and the wall was ignominiously replaced by a low flat-roofed parking garage; the linden trees along the road to Gasson Hall that were for decades trimmed back into ice-cream cone shapes, (so that they seem at first glance to be wrought evergreens), allowing now-lost views of the Tower from

the main entrance; the grandness of the Chestnut Hill reservoirs, which through much of the early 20th century seem to have made up an important local parkland (regular tours were offered), their landscaped slopes firmed by stone retaining walls that framed swaths of grass, carefully placed trees, stone outcrops from which the weeds were trimmed back, and curving, broad, gray gravel paths carrying horse-drawn carriages and recreational walkers, including, on one postcard, a pair of hatted-and-suited men out of an Edward Gorey drawing who've stopped to chat and exchange harsh views of the Kaiser or flappers.

But while the picture sides of the postcards are intriguing, the flip sides—"Message here," manufacturers often noted helpfully—are moving: the brief communications, none more than 30 or so words, written in handwritings that would have been as instantly recognizable to the card's recipient as the associated face, each message signed with love, or "see you Monday," or "best regards," from the long dead to the long dead.

"Once more the Army seems to have put it over on the Navy. How you will enjoy those cigars," "ex Sgt. Major" wrote on the back of a photo of Gasson Hall ("New Boston College") to Lieutenant J. King MacLean, of Boston, in July 1919. "This is the church I visited last Sunday for the first time," Priscilla wrote of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Boston College's earliest home, to Minnie DeCormier, of West Broock [sic], Maine on an undetermined date. "Dear Jean, just a few lines that I am well remember me always as your true friend," M. Hussey wrote, somewhat disjointedly, to Miss Jean Elliott, of Boston, on the back of a view of the Chestnut Hill reservoirs in November 1907. While seven or so years later, Abbie, writing on the back of another view of Gasson Hall, advised Miss Frances Cypher of Willimantic, Connecticut, "Take my advice Frances and hurry up."

Whether Lieutenant MacLean smoked his cigars with pleasure, or M. Hussey and Miss Elliott continued in true friendship the rest of their (long? short?) lives, or Miss Cypher did what she was being urged to do or did not and was glad of it or regretful, we cannot know. What we do know is enough, though. *Sunt lacrimae rerum*, Virgil has Aeneas mourn when in his journey he comes on frescoes of Troy's destruction—there are tears at the heart of things.

Our story on other things begins on page 32.

—BEN BIRNBAUM

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Photographer Lee Pellegrini has been capturing dress rehearsals of the main-stage productions at Robsham Theater since the facility opened in autumn 1981. His work has been collected into a year-by-year slideshow. (pg. 8) • The 2011 Boston College Annual Report highlights six programs that reflect the University's liberal arts ambitions and the new center dedicated to achieving them. (pg. 13) • On September 22 in the Heights Room, professors from Harvard Divinity and Episcopal Divinity responded to a talk by Georgetown's Peter C. Phan on "Cultural Identity and Interreligious Dialogue." View the discussion. (pg. 47) • READER'S LIST: Books by alumni, faculty, and staff • HEADLINERS: Alumni in the news

BOSTON COLLEGE

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LETTERS

AMBIDEXTROUS

Re "To the Core," by William Bole (Summer 2011): As an Arts and Sciences graduate, I was delighted to read of the Carroll School of Management's new approach to facilitating students' taking of additional A&S coursework. Boston College provided me a breadth of perspective and critical thinking through my courses in English literature, Russian, philosophy, history, and more. Having worked in business my entire career, I have come to equally respect the importance of the "art and science of management" that the Carroll School offers its students. Career success is a function of developing both areas of ability.

I congratulate dean Andy Boynton and the review committee for having the courage to adopt the new approach.

Michael D. White '74
Norwalk, Connecticut

The writer is the CEO of DirecTV.

FINDING EVIL

In "Evil Intent" by Alan Wolfe (Summer 2011), Professor Wolfe raises some important questions: Are Americans, in their search for a better world, becoming less sensitive to the political evils of our day? Is this search for a better world so compelling that some dreamers are willing to kill anyone who stands in their way? Has the American belief that we are blessed by God to advance the cause of liberty led America into becoming a totalitarian state?

Professor Wolfe speaks eloquently of how we must overcome the longstanding hostility between religious thinkers and those of a more secular bent. It is a question of drawing insight from prophets and believers who know something about human imperfection.

What disturbs me is that Professor Wolfe, like many liberal intellectuals, seems unwilling to make an honest critique of global corporate rule, which is proving to be the predominant evil of our

time. There is fear in our churches, universities, and newsrooms.

Stephen V. Riley '56
Tahoe City, California

"Evil Intent" was very thoughtful in its emphasis on the truth of Judaic-Christian morality as opposed to modern, relativistic judgments. But when discussing evil, can one discount the role of religion in the promotion of "fruitfulness" and pronouncements against birth control?

In my view, overpopulation is one root cause of "evil"—it plays out in sins of genocide, war, and mass starvation, to say nothing of the general degradation of our planet. Competition for resources brings out some of the worst in human nature. In the face of exponential growth in our numbers, the failure of organized religions to speak out against unlimited procreation—indeed their failure to demand the opposite—seems to me to be in itself particularly evil.

Anne Blau, MA '88, Ph.D. '92
Summit, New Jersey

EAGLES AND SOX

The article by Dan Barry, "The Longest Game: Joe Morgan's Life in Baseball" (Summer 2011), captures the magnificence of the man. Joe '53, a Boston College and Boston Red Sox hall-of-famer, endeared himself to the hearts of all New England baseball fans—not only for his achievements as a manager, but because he is truly one of them, born with the Red Sox imbedded in his heart.

How ironic in 1974 for Joe to be calling then Red Sox executive Dick O'Connell '37 for the Pawtucket manager's job. Joe had no idea Dick was a BC alumnus.

These two BC men, along with several others—Sox pitching coach Mike Roarke '52, Eddie Pelligrini (who played for the Red Sox in the 1940s and then coached at Boston College)—contributed greatly to the success of the Red Sox teams over the last 25 years of Yawkey ownership. Those teams achieved the second highest won-

lost record in all of major league baseball, bettered only by the New York Yankees.

There are countless former major league players across the country who will openly attribute their success to the great skills of Joe Morgan as a teacher, mentor, and coach.

*John Harrington '57, MBA'66, H'10
Westwood, Massachusetts*

The writer was CEO of the Boston Red Sox Baseball Club from 1986 to 2002.

HORSE SENSE

In the Summer 2011 issue, Sage Stossel writes about an alumnus who is a race-horse trainer, in "Fast Track." While work in the horseracing industry may seem glamorous, we should all be aware of the dark side of horseracing.

On its website, the Jockey Club, the organization that maintains the national thoroughbred registry, states that each year 25,000 to 30,000 thoroughbred foals are born and registered in the United States for the purposes of racing. But only a small percentage of these horses have the talent for a racing career, and even those that race may only have a career that lasts a few years. With decent care, the average life span of a horse is more than 30 years, so we need to consider what happens to the thousands of horses that are no longer useful to the racing industry.

A few lucky horses get a new home with a family or end up at a retirement farm, but most are sent to horse auctions, where the buyers from slaughterhouses await. The horses are trucked (often inhumanely) to slaughterhouses in Canada or Mexico—U.S. horsemeat is sold primarily in Europe and Japan.

It is irresponsible for the racing industry to breed thousand of foals each year without any plan for the proper care of these long-lived animals, and such an industry should not be supported.

*Jane Hoffman '75
New York, New York*

The writer is president of the Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals.

SISTERS

In "Training Grounds" (Summer 2011), Katarina Schuth, OSF, wrote in part:

"With 19,000 fewer priests in this country in 2010 than in 1967 (and 118,000 fewer sisters)... Perhaps, she should have expanded more on those last four words. The Catholic Church will survive in this country with fewer priests. However, with the dramatic loss of women religious, Catholic schools and hospitals may not be so fortunate.

*Vito Tamboli '56
St. Louis, Missouri*

READING VATICAN II

Re "Legal Aid" by Seth Meehan (Spring, 2011): Practicing Catholics who were paying attention during the time of the Second Vatican Council were fully aware that the teaching of the Catholic Church, which prohibited Catholics from "undertaking methods of regulating procreation which are found blameworthy by the teaching authority of the Church in its unfolding of the divine law," was not changed.

There were many who were very relieved at this.

*Alice Slattery, NC'53, M.Ed.'80, D.Ed.'89
Framingham, Massachusetts*

ADDIE'S PLACE

Every time I fold a linen napkin into a crystal goblet in my dining room in preparation for a dinner party shared with my husband Mike '83, a former student manager of "The Rat," I remember with great fondness my mentor Adelaide Lalli (1922–2011)—known to all in Dining Services as Addie. She stood with me when I was screened by the Secret Service to be the waitress for Vice President George Bush, the 1982 Commencement speaker; she stood proudly in the congregation when Mike and I were married in 1984; and she welcomed my children to campus at Addie's Place when they became Eagles starting in 2003.

When I began my studies at Boston College in the fall of 1979, the search for extra funds for weekend nights at Mary Anne's and Molly's led me to the college dining service and a "career" as a "caterette." And while my classroom experiences gained me admission to a respected law school, my time working as a student manager for Addie changed my life skills that I rely on to this day.

The friendships formed during Laetare Sunday and Senior Week double shifts have remained rock solid for 30 years. What a gift Addie was to all of us, who learned the value of hard work, attention to detail, and customer service under her skilled tutelage. She was loved by many—a treasured link in the unique chain of life that the University creates for us all.

*Kathy McHugh Cote '83
Atlanta, Georgia*

Update: Readers of the story by Zak Jason '11 titled "Curtain Call: The Secretary and the Blogger" (Summer 2011) will remember how the recent Commencement speaker, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, singled out Allison Lantero, a graduating senior, in his remarks. Writing for the website Her Campus, Lantero had blogged in part, "Now that our sighs of disappointment have subsided, what we really want to know is: Who is Ray LaHood?" adding, "all we can hope is that the speech is short." (She also offered her readers a brief biography of LaHood.) From the Commencement stage, the Secretary called out good naturedly, "Where you at, Allison? Stand up, Allison! I read what you said." He continued, "I promise I'll be brief." Lantero, a theater major, responded with equal good humor, smiling and shrugging broadly for the audience as LaHood read her words aloud. Later, Lantero and LaHood met briefly; she sent him a thank you note for making her graduation memorable.

Fast-forward to the present. Having been invited by the Transportation Department's Office of Public Affairs to participate in its application process, Lantero is now working as an intern there, helping with press releases, the department's Fastlane blog, and special events. She is also enrolled in Georgetown University's master of professional studies in journalism program. "Living in Washington was a dream of mine since I was in first grade," Lantero recently told the Boston College Chronicle. "Back then I dreamed of being president, but at the moment I am quite happy with interning and taking journalism courses."

BCM welcomes letters from readers.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and must be signed to be published. Our fax number is (617) 552-2441; our e-mail address is bcm@bc.edu.

Lipden Lane

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CAMPUS DIGEST

The Screaming Eagles Marching Band released *Traditions*, a **20-plus song CD** that includes "For Boston" and "Sweet Caroline," etc., but also strays into "Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi," from the 1937 hit *Carmina Burana*, by the well-known sousaphone fan Carl Orff. ✂ With **21 Fulbright winners** this year, Boston College finished eighth among research universities. Michigan led the field with 29. ✂ Lamps, chairs, and microwaves collected in last spring's **Move-Out Days**, along with beds, desks, and tables saved from residence hall renovations, furnished, among other sites, a new western Massachusetts facility that houses women recovering from addictions. ✂ With 6,153 students this year, the College of Arts and Sciences set a **new enrollment record**. Communication (916), economics (847), and biology (827) led all majors. The Lynch School was first in graduate students with 1,003, followed by A&S (864), the Carroll School (839), and Law (791). ✂ Sailing head coach Greg Wilkinson was appointed assistant coach for the U.S. team at this fall's Pan American Games. Wilkinson's Boston College teams have won the last **four co-ed national championships**. ✂ Boston College physicists led by Zhifeng Ren discovered two previously overlooked stages of **carbon nanotube growth**. ✂ Some 100 members of the University community participated in a road race and raised scholarship funds

in memory of **Alex Grant '13**, who died during his sophomore year. ✂ "Strive," a live stream application for college campuses; "Neuro Tone," which would use brain imaging to guide music marketing; "Future Suits," a proposal to support innovative design and materials in men's clothing; and "Augmentide," a curriculum that would teach retirees to use high tech, finished just about in that order (the last two proposals tied for third) in this year's Venture Competition **Elevator Pitch** contest in the Carroll School. ✂ Amit Aburmad '12, described by the *Heights* as "a key player" on the soccer team, sat out a game against Wake Forest in **observance of the Yom Kippur holiday**. The Eagles won 2-0. ✂ Student Affairs placed a temporary moratorium on **concerts in Conte Forum** due to the number of alcohol-related medical calls recently associated with them; 35 calls were tied to one concert last year. ✂ In tribute to basketball coach Steve Donahue, a group of students formed **Donahue's Disciples**: "a grassroots revolution aimed at creating one of the best fan bases in the country." ✂ The five-story office building that had been 21 Campanella Way since it was completed in 2002 became **Maloney Hall**, honoring a "Light the World" campaign contribution to the University by Nancy and T.J. Maloney '75. ✂ Boston College removed painted parking lines from the asphalt on Lipden Lane, thus indicating that



YOUNG AGAIN—Following 15 months of renovations, during which its exterior was completely refurbished—stones recast, joints repointed, entrances rebuilt—a more energy efficient Gasson Hall reopened in late August. Gasson 100 was renovated and the space that was the Weston Jenks Honors Library was converted to a study oasis named Gasson Commons. (The library will move into the new Stokes Hall, now under construction.) The 98-year-old building, conceived by Boston College's 13th president (1907–14), Thomas I. Gasson, SJ, was the University's first building on the Heights.

parking is no longer permitted on the tree-shaded pathway toward Gasson Tower. Additional instructions arrived in the form of parking tickets. ✂ Three members of the psychology faculty received prestigious (and monetarily generous) **"early career" awards** in recent months. Liane Young received her grant for work on the cognitive bases of moral reasoning. Elizabeth Kensinger was tapped for research in cognitive neuroscience. Alexa Veenema was cited for her work on the brain's regulation of juvenile social behaviors. ✂ Since it was placed on the University's home page in May 2011, a simulated **tour of Stokes Hall** (scheduled for completion in fall 2012) has led all other features in number of viewers, beating out a video of a campus visit by actor James Franco, and a 360°

tour of President Leahy's personal office. Of the last named, the *Heights* editorialized "If BC really is Hogwarts, then this means the Chamber of Secrets has been opened." Digest does not understand that, but assumes some readers will. ✂ Speaking of the student newspaper, it began publishing a **serial short story** in five installments by five writers. The first, authored by Michael Wolf '12, began "Herman Sherbert woke with a gasp, breaching into morning from the deep seabed of dreams." ✂ Students voiced dismay when Dining Services temporarily pulled Chobani yogurt from its shelves. Several customers had complained of mold in sealed containers. Dining Services sells more than 10,000 cases of the Greek yogurt annually. In other culinary news, Dining Services placed seventh in

the Daily Beast's **"Best College Food"** survey. ✂ In a sort of sting (it was pre-advertised in the *Newton Tab* and on campus) Newton and Boston College police cited 23 drivers for failing to **yield to pedestrians** in marked and signed crosswalks on Beacon Street on a single day in September. A University police officer noted that "we've had several students hit by vehicles, and a lot of close calls." ✂ The Graduate School of Social Work celebrated its 75th anniversary and founded a doctoral program in **international social welfare**. ✂ Buttressed by improved "faculty resources," a number-26 placement by guidance counselors, and improved rates of alumni giving, Boston College retained its number-31 position—its highest ever—in *U.S. News rankings* of American universities. —Ben Birnbaum



Meese meets with students at 10 Stone Avenue.

Visitors days

By William Bole

A year-old seminar draws undergraduates to wide-angle economics

On a warm, sunny afternoon in September, Colonel Michael J. Meese strode into 10 Stone Avenue, headquarters of Boston College's Institute for the Liberal Arts, after a four-hour drive from West Point, New York, where he teaches economics at the United States Military Academy. Meese fixed himself a cup of coffee and was shown to his office, a sparsely furnished room set aside for guests. He draped his dress blue Army blazer over one side of the desk, opened his laptop, and greeted his first appointment, economics doctoral student John O'Trakoun.

O'Trakoun, tall and slender and wearing a gray T-shirt and blue jeans, was there to discuss his dissertation topic with Meese, who has served as a senior military economic advisor during four deployments in Iraq and two in Afghanistan. "I'm interested in economics and conflict, and how economic uncertainty drives con-

flict," said the student, whose parents fled hostilities in Laos in the mid-1970s (and recalibrated their surname after settling in Poughkeepsie, New York).

Meese suggested ways of quantifying this dynamic as he perused a 16-page outline of O'Trakoun's dissertation, tentatively titled "Prices, Uncertainty, and Intrastate Conflict." The colonel leaned back in his chair and smiled when he arrived at pages with data charts. "For an economics dissertation, it's not required that your approach match reality," he said with a wry chuckle. "But it's a happy coincidence when it does, and your research seems to do that."

Meese was on campus September 26 and 27 to participate in an economic policy seminar supported by Boston College's Institute for the Liberal Arts (ILA), which aims to nurture conversations across disciplinary lines. The cross-fertilizing topic of his two days was the economics of

national security. After nearly half an hour with O'Trakoun and another meeting to discuss data sources with two undergraduates assisting an economist with research on World War II, he donned his blazer and black beret and walked across Beacon Street to Higgins Hall. There he presented a talk, "Conflict and Post-Conflict Economics: The Case of Afghanistan," to the undergraduate students of the International Economic Policy and Political Economy Seminar (EC 295).

Launched in September 2010, the seminar brings prominent scholars and policymakers to Chestnut Hill for presentations and discussion. Meese was the first visitor of this academic year. Eight others, including George A. Akerlof, a Nobel laureate in economics from the University of California, Berkeley, have been lined up for the fall. Jorge Braga de Macedo, a Portuguese economist who served as his strapped country's finance minister from 1991 to 1993, was set to speak to the class on September 12, but had to bow out and reschedule after Portugal's Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho asked him for a report on the rapidly escalating European debt crisis.

Twenty-one undergraduates—with majors in political science, international studies, and other subjects, including economics—enrolled in the one-credit course for the fall semester. The seminar is also offered in the spring. The talks, usually delivered on Monday afternoons, are open to all students and faculty (graduate students and professors often double the number in attendance). Informal conversations between guests and students, both one-on-one and in small groups—sometimes over lunch or dinner—are also arranged through the seminar.

Fabio Ghironi is the Boston College associate professor of economics who conceived of and coordinates EC 295. A specialist in monetary economics (he teaches a course called World Economy: Gold Standard to Globalization), Ghironi started thinking a couple of years ago about how most economics seminars emphasize "technique," with a strong reliance on statistical tools and mathematical models. What was needed, he says, was a course featuring presenters who would "leave the fancy footwork out . . . and talk

about the substance” of international economic policy issues. Around that time, the Institute for the Liberal Arts began supporting programs in which guest speakers—writers, musicians, philosophers, social scientists—stay on for a period of days to work closely with students and faculty from varied departments and disciplines. “That created an opening for the kind of seminar I had in mind,” said the Italian-born Ghironi, who is also a visiting scholar at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

MEESE LECTURED TO NEARLY 50 students, with several professors on hand. He started off by noting that as he was departing Afghanistan this past summer, General John Allen asked if he’d like to sign on for yet another deployment. The colonel drew laughs by relating his apocryphal response to the commander of U.S. forces: He couldn’t stay because he had to speak to Fabio’s students on September 26. The lesson, he added: “Never go to Afghanistan unless you have a good exit strategy.”

Standing at a lectern, Meese clicked on a PowerPoint slide with a chart indicating diminishing levels of “enemy action” in different parts of Afghanistan. His point was that security is a pillar of economic development, partly because it lowers the price of delivering goods and services. “And this goes right back to your dissertation,” Meese said, motioning toward the second row where John O’Trakoun sat, scribbling notes on a yellow legal pad. Meese allowed that the military has found little use for pure free-market ideology in confronting Afghanistan’s economic challenges. Abolishing price controls, for example, would likely contribute to political unrest, he said.

Following the hour-and-a-half seminar, Meese returned to the ILA offices with two doctoral students, two professors, and an undergraduate for further discussion (students in the seminar are required to join at least one of these small sessions). Seated around the table in a small conference room, the group considered questions such as why the United States doesn’t just convert its military spending to economic assistance in Afghanistan—a point raised by Mikhail Dmitriev, a fourth-

year doctoral student in economics from Russia. “That’s a great idea,” Meese replied in a supportive tone—and it would be impossible to do politically. There’s literally no support for that in Congress.”

The colonel’s next stop was Tartufo in Newton Centre, where a reconfigured group of five students and professors joined him and his wife, Ramona, for dinner. Estelle Baik ’12, a Slavic studies major, was part of the mix. Born in Los Angeles, she spent 13 years of her childhood in Russia with her Korean-born parents and is an Air Force ROTC cadet. Baik said she enrolled in the seminar because she is writing a senior thesis on Far East Russian economics. One of the topics she commented on during dinner was the impact of political corruption on economies. “My parents still often talk about the corruption that was all around us in Russia,” said Baik, who also garnered plenty of advice from Meese about mili-

tary assignments and opportunities for graduate study.

The following day before returning to West Point, Meese met at 8:30 A.M. with six ROTC cadets and the University’s ROTC company commander, Major Brandon Russell, in a Maloney Hall faculty lounge. Among other subjects, this group took up broad matters of politics (Meese presented poll findings to suggest that military people are more moderate in their views than the general population) and moral philosophy (“What does it mean to be a professional?” Meese asked).

Ghironi says a principal aim of EC 295 is to nurture policy conversations that might not otherwise take place, involving people who might not otherwise be having them. The professor admits to being largely unversed in the economics of national security. Now, he says, he and others on campus are beginning to ask questions like “What are the tools for controlling price dynamics in a conflict situation?” ■

Data file: The Class of 2015

2014: Mean SAT score (on a scale of 2400), an all-time high

1,147/966: Women/men

616: AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American) students, 29.2 percent of the class

325: Legacy students, 15.4 percent of the class

119: International students, from 24 countries

47: Percent of class from the three states sending the highest number of students—Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey

43: States represented, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands

33.4: Percent of Carroll School of Management freshmen who are female

15.8: Percentage of Lynch School of Education freshmen who are male

3: Commuting students

1: Number of freshmen from each of the following: Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, Wyoming

0: Students from the following states: Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia

32,974: Number of applications submitted, a new record



Gordon MacRae as King Arthur and Patricia Raube '82 as Guinevere in *Camelot*, October 1981

Mishaps and miracles

An interview with Stuart J. Hecht

Tales from Robsham Theater

The Robsham Theater Arts Center celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. Named for E. Paul Robsham Jr., who died in an automobile accident in 1983 following his freshman year, the 32,000-square-foot facility houses a 591-seat main theater, the 200-seat black-box Bonn Studio Theater, and a large lobby exhibition space. The first show opened October 30, 1981, a production of *Camelot* featuring musical film star Gordon MacRae (*Carousel*, *Oklahoma*) as King Arthur. Since then, the main stage has hosted some 120 plays. Stuart J. Hecht, associate professor of drama and director of 21 of those productions, joined the theater department in 1986. He calls Robsham a laboratory, "like Higgins Hall is to the chemistry department, a place for us to educate students and put them in situations where they can test out

their knowledge." In an interview with BCM, he recounted some memorable experiments:

1989 *Mother Courage and Her Children*

The play is set in the middle of the 17th century, during the Thirty Years' War. In the second-to-last scene, *Mother Courage*, who is trying to feed off the war—she's got this little wagon of wares, and she follows the army—has gone into a town, leaving her mute daughter Kattrin with the wagon. Soldiers prepare to invade and massacre the villagers, and Kattrin sees them. She gets a drum—I had her grab a pot and a spoon—and clangs away to warn the townspeople. The soldiers threaten her, and she bangs even louder, and the clamor builds and it builds until the soldiers produce a musket. Then the

lieutenant yells "fire," the musket goes BANG, she crumples, and the drumming stops. It's a heartbreaking scene.

At our first performance, everything was going to plan. They brought the musket forward—we had found a reenactment piece—the lieutenant yelled "fire," and the gun quietly went "click." The actor playing the lieutenant improvised: "Well, we were just warning you. Now we really mean it." Being a good actress, Kattrin kept pounding away, getting louder and louder, and the gun again went "click." Cast members who were in the wings signaled to her, and all of a sudden she dropped the pot, grabbed her chest, and collapsed, as if suffering cardiac arrest from fright. It turned out we had kept the powder in a place that was moist, and the humidity prevented it from igniting.

1991 *Brigadoon*

There was a student in the program whose parents had a petting zoo on Cape Cod, so Doc [Professor J. Paul Marcou] got him to bring a goat to the theater. Now, where are you going to keep a goat in a theater? Shep [Barnett, associate director of the Robsham Theater] set up some barriers in the scene shop, almost a cage. The problem was, the goat had to stay there for three or four days, and it would "baa . . . baa . . . baa," and you could hear it throughout the building. So students would be working on their sensitive, internal pieces in acting classes—"Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him . . ." and "baa!" When the show finally opened, with a real audience, the goat wouldn't go onstage. They never got it on the stage.

1992 *Midsummer Night's Dream*

In the very last scene—the wedding of Hippolyta and Theseus—the idea was that Theseus would make his entrance and the party guests would make a fuss—bravo, bravo. This would buy time for a costume change by Hippolyta, who would come onstage in a gorgeous gown. But instead of Hippolyta, out came Demetrius. Then Lysander appeared. The actors were trying to improvise, and one turned to the student playing Philstrate: "Well, Philstrate, verily, what do you think? Come here and

join us." And he said, "Uh, no." After a while, Hippolyta emerged in her gown. It turned out our wonderful costume designer had designed beyond our resources and literally had to sew Hippolyta into her dress. The episode lasted maybe three minutes, but onstage 15 seconds is forever.

1997 *Buried Child*

This play takes place on a farm in downstate Illinois. We decided the previous year that we would produce it just before Thanksgiving. It's a good time to do the show, except for one little thing—Shelly, a character in the play, has to shuck corn. Where can you get real corn in November? So in August we went out and bought three bushels of corn, which we stored in the home freezer of Laura Brainard, who worked in Student Affairs with my wife. When rehearsals started, Laura would bring two or three days' worth of corn to my office. We didn't have refrigeration, so I kept it on the floor. We did that for about 10 days. And I started to realize that you could smell the corn. First, it was in adjacent offices. Then it was further and further down the central hallway. And then came the bugs. The show worked beautifully, but my office smelled of corn for two and a half years. We did get rid of the bugs eventually.

1999 *Into the Woods* (Cinderella)

I often film productions, and one night as I was filming the Cinderella portion of Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, I noticed that Cinderella still had both her shoes on after the ball. The actress realized it almost immediately—you saw a look cross her face. She was singing her song convincingly ("On the Steps of the Palace"), and she dropped herself down just a bit, so that her dress went to the ground. Somehow she retrieved the shoe, brought it up behind her back, and held it there—even switched hands at one point to gesture. That was a moment. If I hadn't known better, I wouldn't have seen it. The audience certainly didn't.

1999 *Into the Woods* (the witch's curse)

This is a crazy show, because there are maybe five or six different stories going on simultaneously. It's like a traffic jam on stage, and you're always trying to keep track of who's where, when. There's a point when the baker is arguing with Little Red Riding Hood, and the witch is supposed to jump around and yell at him and rush off. At the Friday night performance, the actress who was playing the witch, who had hit her mark every single time during eight weeks of rehearsal, decided to check her makeup, and she missed her cue.

Because the tech people knew it was time for her to come on stage, they automatically turned her mike on, just as she turned to the person next to her at the makeup table and shrieked F#*K, S#*T, F#*K!

I happened to be in the audience behind Fr. Joseph Appleyard [the Jesuit vice president for University Mission and Ministry] and a colleague of his when this came over the speakers, and the two of them turned and looked at one another. After the show Fr. Appleyard came up to me, and he was very generous and kind with his comments, and I said, "I'm sorry that we had that little incident." He said, "Oh, I just figured it was Sondheim."

2006 *Macbeth*

I was directing Shakespeare's "Scottish play"—the title of which you're not supposed to mention in a theater unless you're working on it—and there is a moment in Act Four in which Macbeth decides to murder the family of his rival, MacDuff. Shakespeare creates a horrendous scene—murderers sent by Macbeth rape MacDuff's wife and kill his son, a sweet child. We found a young local boy named Noah to play the part of the son, and we staged an elaborate bit where the son runs from one murderer to the other, and he's flipped over one attacker's shoulder, and then he's stabbed with a dagger and cries out to his mother. It's very tragic. The only problem was we couldn't get Noah to stop smiling. He was getting to be with these big BC guys, getting to scream and yell and run around. I said to him, "Noah, you have to stop smiling," and he said, "But Dr. Hecht, I'm having so much fun." And he kept on smiling. Just before the first show, I tried once more, explaining the value of pathos, and he got it. From that point on, he almost had tears running down his face. ■

Stuart J. Hecht teaches courses on directing, playwriting, dramatic literature, and theater history. He is editor-in-chief of the *New England Theatre Journal*. Hecht was interviewed for BCM by Bill McDonald, a senior editor in the Office of Marketing Communications.



For a slideshow of scenes from 30 years of Robsham productions, go to Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.



Robsham's 30th anniversary show, *Into the Woods*; Samantha Goober '15 (center) was Cinderella.

How we remember

Ten years after

On the Tuesday morning of September 11, 2001, a rare quiet pervaded the campus, but not a stillness. As dreadful images aired on television screens in the dining halls and elsewhere, meetings in the President's office yielded key decisions: Classes would continue, as a way of providing students with small-group settings in which to discuss the events. A prayer service would be held on O'Neill Plaza at noon and a Mass said in the

early evening in Conte Forum (attended by 4,000). A phone bank was staffed in Gasson Hall to assist students from affected areas. Boston College lost 22 alumni that day and three parents of current students, as well as 43 relatives of members of its community. This past September, the 10th anniversary of 9/11 was marked with similar purpose by the University—with lectures and prayers and testaments to lives lived. ■

Below: At the Eagles' September 17 home football game against Duke, some 6,000 fans wore red bandannas to honor Welles Crowther '99, who died at the age of 24 in the south tower of the World Trade Center after helping more than a dozen people escape the building. Crowther, an equities trader and volunteer firefighter, always carried a red bandanna with him and on that morning was using one as a mask against the smoke.





1. On the morning of September 11, economics professor Harold Petersen visited the labyrinth outside Burns Library that commemorates the 22 Boston College alumni (from 1966 to 2001) who died in the attacks. Peterson had taught six of them. 2. Later, in Gasson 100, theater department faculty member Patricia Riggins and David Anderson Lewis of the University's information technology office (and Actors Equity) staged a reading of *The Guys*, a play honoring New York City firefighters. 3. On September 21 in Devlin Hall, Patti Quigley, widowed on 9/11, spoke after a screening of the documentary *Beyond Belief*. 4. On September 12, Sanford Levinson (left), visiting professor at Harvard Law School, joined theology professor Ken Himes (center) and ex-CIA officer Glen Carle (right) in Higgins 310 to discuss "Interrogation Policy after Osama bin Laden." 5. On September 15, University President William P. Leahy, SJ, presided at the Mass of the Holy Spirit, held in Conte Forum.



Lewis (left) and students at Longfellow's Cambridge house in September with guide Rob Velella

Exhibitioners

By Jane Whitehead

Paul Lewis's English students restore spurned writers to the light

For the 12 undergraduates enrolled this fall in professor Paul Lewis's advanced English seminar, Forgotten Chapters/Boston Literary History (EN 619), course work started in June. The class, which examines neglected players in Boston's literary world between 1790 and 1860, serves as the basis for an exhibition of the same name curated by Lewis and scheduled to open at the Boston Public Library (BPL) and the Massachusetts Historical Society next spring. Lewis is involving his students in all aspects of the project—from research to exhibit selection. They are drafting wall texts and recording audio commentaries. With much to accomplish on a short timetable, a summer start was necessary.

The idea for the exhibition sprang from a 2010 BPL show that Lewis curated, *The Raven in the Frog Pond*, which explored the fractious relationship between a thirty-something Edgar Allan Poe and

the literary dons of Boston. "That sort of thing gets into your blood—being a curator—something I had never done before," says Lewis, whose academic specialty is American humor. The story of Poe and the "Frogpondians," as Poe witheringly described Boston's literati (he also accused Henry Wadsworth Longfellow of plagiarism), is just "one example of the literary past that Boston is ignoring," Lewis says.

Lewis has mobilized resources across the University to develop the exhibition, obtaining funding from the Institute for the Liberal Arts and the American Studies Program, among others, plus an Academic Technical Innovation Grant for the exhibition's online component. The Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program provided support for the students' summer work, as they investigated scholarly databases and trawled digitized periodicals such as the *Ladies Magazine* and *Literary Gazette* (started in 1828)

and the *American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge* (1834–37).

Students and teachers from other departments also have joined the project. Jonathan Sage's audio production class, Fundamentals of Audio II, is helping Lewis's group to record the exhibition's audio components (for instance, a brief life story of Susanna Rowson, author of the 1791 best-selling novel, *Charlotte Temple*). These audio clips will be part of the online version of the exhibition and will also be available to visitors on site via mobile devices such as smartphones.

In addition, the Forgotten Chapters website will include period music selected and recorded by music professor Jeremiah McGrann and performed by Boston College students and faculty. "I was surprised to find how many settings of Longfellow there are," says McGrann, a specialist in 19th-century music; he discovered two volumes in the BPL with songs based on some 39 texts by Longfellow, including five musical versions of "The Village Blacksmith."

The material covered by the course and exhibition falls into six "chapters," or themes. Lewis himself has already developed two sections: "Longfellow's Serenity, Poe's Prediction" traces the authors' rivalry and their changing critical fortunes, as seen through periodicals, letters, and journal entries. (One such entry by Longfellow celebrates his disdain for Poe's harsh style of criticism: "In Hexameter sings serenely a Harvard Professor/In Pentameter him damns censorious Poe"). "Turning to Literature to Prove Equality, or What Do Boston's African-American, Irish, and Women Writers have in Common?" illustrates how members of disempowered groups used publishing in various forms to advance their causes.

The students have been working in small groups to further three topics: "Lydia Maria Child and the Development of Children's Literature"; "The Banker-Poet Charles Sprague" (author of "Curiosity," delivered in 1829 to the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University, and "To My Cigar"); and "The First Seasons of the Federal Street Theater" (where Edgar Allan Poe's mother and grandmother performed). For the sixth section, "Treasures and

Turkeys: Adventures in Reading Boston Magazines," the entire class is combing pre-Civil War literary periodicals such as the ephemeral *Boston Weekly Magazine* (1802–05) and the *Boston Literary Magazine* (1832–33).

As a native of southern California, Erica Navarro '13, sees the course as a chance to learn about a "rich literary culture." The double major in political science and English notes also that "many of the people we have discussed or researched had political and financial stakes deep within the city," citing Child, who was a noted abolitionist, a women's rights advocate, and the author of the Thanksgiving poem "Over the River and Through the Woods."

AT A CLASS MEETING DURING THE third week of the semester, copies of recent discoveries—treasures and turkeys—cover the tables in McGuinn 526. "You have about four weeks before you have to say, 'this is what I want to develop for this exhibit,'" Lewis tells the students. After a lively discussion that ranges through early feminism and shifting opinions about the balance between pleasure and instruction in children's literature, the group considers the week's contenders. "I

think this is so turkeyish, it's a treasure," says Alexandra Mitropoulos '12, of junior Harry Kent's selection: a Scottish dialect poem, "To a Hand Organ," drawn from the August 1810 *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review*. "Out on your noise, ye blastit wight,/ That breaks my slumbers ilka night,/ Grindin your tunes for very spite/ Through thick and thin," complains the anonymous poet.

Kristen House '12 dismisses to utter turkeydom another anonymous work, "To A Friend Who Reproaches Me of Melancholy," from an 1803 issue of the same magazine. Beginning with the lament: "To me the budding scenes decay,/ Which glow'd in fancy's brightest hue," and ending with a prayer for "death's oblivious sleep," the poem is a litany of tired metaphors, says House.

Treasures might be hard to come by, concedes Lewis. He plans to invite other American literature professors, at Boston College and elsewhere, to propose lost works by their favorite obscure authors.

"Forgotten Chapters" is scheduled to open at the Boston Public Library and at the Massachusetts Historical Society in April 2012. ■

Jane Whitehead is a Boston-based writer.

approached, took her student by the hand, and led her to the center aisle of Murray to meet the evening's special guest, poet Brian Turner.

A serious man with short hair and a thick frame, the 43-year-old Turner earned his MFA from the University of Oregon. In 1999 he began a seven-year career with the U.S. Army, including one year as an infantry team leader in Iraq, where he wrote poems and carried a favorite, "Here, Bullet," in a Ziploc bag in his left chest pocket. It became the title poem in his 2005 debut collection, a *New York Times* Editors' Choice selection that year.

"Just take a deep breath. It's no big deal," Turner told the younger poet, adding, "The hardest part is over." That is, she'd written the poem.

The poetry festival, which dates to the late 1980s, rotated among Boston-area campuses, took a hiatus, then found a permanent home in 2006 in Chestnut Hill, where it is sponsored by *Boston College Magazine* and Poetry Days, the English department's annual celebration of the art form. Turner's visit was supported in part by the Institute for the Liberal Arts.

During the student readings, Turner sat in the front row, his arms folded, a look of steady interest and intensity on his face. He talked with students and guests for almost an hour afterward about their work and ideas. Turner said he has been invited to read his work at many universities recently, but "seldom in such a relaxing environment" where he could spend time with students and faculty. He had done that earlier in the day at Hovey House, where he took part in a question-and-answer session with approximately 30 students and faculty members.

Taking her turn at the podium that evening, Leahy read "Variations of a Theme By" ("When I think of Wordsworth, it is: /—Are you heading west? And / Was it for this?"), without missing a beat. She drew whistles and applause from a crowd that included friends, relatives, and scores of fellow poets. ■



This article is drawn from the 2011 Annual Report, titled *Renaissance: Renewing the Liberal Arts at Boston College*, which may be read online via Full Story at www.bc.edu/bcm.

Performance art

From Boston College's 2011 Annual Report

The poetry coach

Amanda Leahy '11 sat by herself at the back of the Murray Function Room in Yawkey Center, wearing a gray summer dress on an unexpectedly wet, cold April day. Holding a hot cup of coffee with both hands, she scanned a single page that rested in her lap, moving her lips as she silently rehearsed lines of a poem she would read at that day's 2011 Greater Boston Intercollegiate Poetry Festival.

An English major from Lowell, Massachusetts, Leahy was Boston

College's 2011 "entry" at the annual festival, a celebration of undergraduate creativity at 20 local colleges that drew an audience of 300 this year. English professor and festival coordinator Suzanne Matson had chosen her from among students in an advanced poetry writing class. She had never read her poetry to any public wider than the literary workshops in which she had participated.

"I'm excited. I'm a little nervous," Leahy acknowledged. Then Matson



Strother of his samples: Each gram of rock contained "thousands of microfossils."

Rocky beginnings

By Thomas Cooper

Paleontologist Paul Strother finds new clues to early life on land

The study of life in the Precambrian era—from the earth's beginnings some 4.6 billion years ago to about 600 million years ago, when complex organisms are said to have developed—has long focused almost exclusively on the marine, or oceanic, environment. The terrestrial regions, scientists have believed, were, for this 90 percent of the planet's existence, either devoid of life or, at most, home to very simple bacteria known as cyanobacteria. "So much for speculation," wrote Paul Strother, an earth and environmental sciences research professor at Boston College's Weston Observatory, in a 2010 conference abstract of work that he undertook with colleagues from the University of Sheffield and Oxford University. "We have spent two field seasons collecting samples... and [for] the first time we have had a good look at what actually lived in Precambrian terrestrial habitats"—environments that included lakes, streams,

stream banks, and soils. What they discovered, the abstract continued, was a "surprising array of far more complicated evidence of life" than anyone, including the researchers themselves, expected.

The findings, which were published this year in *Nature*, derive from rock samples of a seaside stone called Torridonian gathered by Strother and Charles Wellman, a reader in palaeobiology at the University of Sheffield, from outcroppings along the northwest coast of Scotland. The area has long been known as a source of ancient microfossils (less than a millimeter in size, requiring a hand lens or a microscope for viewing), but has mostly been passed over by scientists.

Strother works in the field of paleontology, specializing, as he puts it, in "the fossil record of how plants originated." About a decade ago, he visited Wellman at Sheffield, where the two examined long-neglected slides of Torridonian microfossils

collected in the 1960s. They noticed "all kinds of weird things," Strother says, including "multicellular balls of tiny cells, membranous sheets of organic matter, and various irregular clusters of cells stuck together." They decided to build a more extensive collection of Torridonian microfossils and attempt to decipher their content and age, and they joined forces with Leila Battison and Martin Brasier of Oxford's department of earth sciences. In 2007, the team received funding for this project from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's exobiology program, which according to its website "supports research on the origins and early evolution of life, the potential of life to adapt to different environments, and the implications for life elsewhere."

STROTHER AND WELLMAN SPENT a total of three weeks in 2008 and 2009 collecting samples of the gray Torridonian shale in 17 locations along a 125-mile stretch of coastline from the Isle of Skye to the Storr peninsula. Because previous investigators had visited a limited number of sites, and "didn't know how to process very well," says Strother, "they just got one or two slides out of it, and they looked and said there's not much here." According to Strother, he and Wellman collected close to 100 samples, "maybe 60 of which are extremely well preserved," with each gram of rock containing "thousands of microfossils."

The rock, which is of aggregate composition, was processed at a laboratory in Sheffield using a technique known as maceration: 10- to 20-gram slivers of an individual sample are mixed with hydrofluoric acid, which dissolves the minerals that make up the rock, releasing the 1 or 2 percent of organic matter—spores, algal cysts, pollen—that is, in Strother's words, "trapped between mineral grains." After further separation and very fine screening, the carbon remains are placed on slide mounts and studied with either a conventional microscope or by transmission electron microscopy.

When they examined the fossilized bits, Strother says, "We expected to find evidence of cyanobacteria." And they did. But the researchers also found a great number of unclassified spherical micro-

fossils possessing a true nucleus that are thought to be the cysts (resting stages) of freshwater algae. Many of these cells are surprisingly large—three to four times the size of modern phytoplankton—and one specimen, measuring almost a millimeter in width, is the largest non-marine fossil known to be Precambrian. Such enormous girth, says Strother, indicates that, contrary to prior thinking, “large cell size is not restricted in time and not confined to the marine realm.”

In addition to single-celled organisms, Strother and Wellman discovered larger, more complex forms that are almost certainly multicellular and were likely exposed to the atmosphere periodically, due to the wet/dry cycles that would have occurred in at least some terrestrial water bodies. (The researchers also found fossilized impressions of raindrops.) Some of the cells were clustered in geometric arrangements that suggest they had undergone cell division by meiosis. This is an indication that by one billion years ago “a sexual phase had evolved in the land-based eukaryotic life cycle,” some 500 million years earlier than previously thought, says Strother.

TO DATE, STROTHER AND HIS FELLOW researchers have noted roughly 50 species among the samples they have examined, “five times greater than the diversity we knew about [previously],” he says. In the *Nature* article, the researchers write that this heterogeneity most likely reflects adaptations to a terrestrial environment that was both more varied and more severe than the ocean, with greater extremes in temperature and salinity. The challenging conditions of the land-based environments, Strother suggests, were a spur to speciation.

Strother and his colleagues have “tons of work” to do to classify the Scottish samples into species. Strother is also investigating a rock deposit in Michigan that is similar to the Torridonian outcroppings in age and composition. He says the rock is “loaded” with microfossils, including “some species overlap” with the Scottish finds. The Michigan rock also needs taxonomic work. When that is completed, Strother says, “we can begin to reconstruct what the biological component of life was like one billion years ago.” ■

John Romeo (1951–2011)

John Romeo was among the better-looking men working at Boston College over the last three decades, and he was also charming, quick-witted, sharp-eyed, and gentle-souled. And his death of cancer at age 60 on August 6 not only is saddening but feels like a dimming of light.

John and I worked very different precincts. As head of capital projects, he built and rebuilt buildings small and immense, and his closing act turned out to be worthy of its ultimacy: the stunningly refurbished Gasson Hall that opened for business just weeks after John died.

I met John in 1980 or so, when we were both greenhorns on Chestnut Hill. Boston College's personnel department was putting new employees through the “developmental” procedures of the day, and John and I ended up attending a workshop meant to raise sensitivities regarding ethnicity. I can't remember much of what transpired except that at one point each of us was asked to team up with a person not of our background and conduct a conversation during which we were required to utter an ethnic slur and a clichéd view relating to our partner's “race.” Being a pair of six-foot-plus guys in a room filled mostly with women, John and I made right for each other. “Dago,” I coughed up, “and you're probably Mafia.” “Kike,” he replied, smiling his matinee idol smile, “and I bet you're tight with a buck.” And then we chatted while the rest of the group worked their way through the assignment.

Friendship among men is an odd thing. It doesn't have to be confessional, or constant, or even explicit for it to work, though it can be all those things as well. A man measures a man and finds him a friend or not, and it's sealed. And, while John and I didn't go boating together (his favorite pastime) or eat and drink together except at Boston College parties, all the many times we passed within hailing distance on campus, we headed for each other, grasped hands, insulted each other like boys on a playground, or brothers, and then stood and talked while the world waited.

I was far from alone in my affection for John. A Mass of Healing, concelebrated by a mustering of priests led by Fr. Leahy, jammed St. Mary's Chapel in May. Pews and aisles were packed with current and former employees of Boston College. And when Fr. Leahy stood over John, seated in a front pew, and asked us to stand and raise our right arms toward our friend and pray for him, we did—hope and yearning drawing all of us into what felt like a vortex of love. I can still feel it.

—Ben Birnbaum



Romeo (right) and University President William P. Leahy, SJ, inspecting Gasson tower in 2008

Assigned reading

COURSE: PO 402—Comparative revolutions

By Paul Christensen

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class examines some of the world's social revolutions, from the period 1789 to 1989. It considers theories, causes, and implications of revolution and includes case studies of efforts that succeeded and efforts that failed.

REQUIRED BOOKS

The Russian Revolution
By Sheila Fitzpatrick (2008)

In this historian's account of the 20th century's first significant social revolution, Stalin's Great Purges of 1937–38 constitute a “monstrous post-script.” For Fitzpatrick, the revolution starts with the Romanov Dynasty's fall and the Provisional Government's short-lived rise to power in 1917 and it reaches completion together with the forced industrialization of the First Five-Year Plan, in 1932. Fitzgerald details a Russia that, at the start of the 20th century, was quasi-feudal, bereft of political organization, and minimally industrial—a great power . . . universally regarded as backward,” she says. She describes the Romanovs' undoing by the events of World War I and their own ineptitude; the bitterly divided post-dynastic period, when power was split between the liberal Provisional Government and the socialist Petrograd Soviet; the victory of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in October 1917; and finally the ascent of Stalin, with his revolution “from above.”

The Russian revolution is generally portrayed as a communist insurrection, but Fitzpatrick calls into question the importance of ideology in bringing the Bolsheviks to power and determining what happened afterward. “All revolutions have *liberté, égalité, fraternité* and other noble slogans inscribed on their banners,” she writes. The Russian revolutionaries won not because they promised communism but because they promised “Land, Peace, and Bread.” Once they were in power, superior organization, arbitrary terror, and divisions among their oppo-



The Russian Revolution, 2008 edition

nents kept them there. The result, says Fitzgerald, was “less than the revolutionaries expected, and different.”

The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran
By Charles Kurzman (2004)

The success of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 initially puzzled many observers. “A seemingly stable regime,” writes sociologist Kurzman, “led by an experienced monarch, buoyed by billions of dollars of oil exports . . . and supported by the world's most powerful countries—how could such a regime fail?” But the central problem of petro-states is that they are independent of society. Such states do not need strong support from their people; they also do not strive for it.

Moreover, Iran's oil wealth appeared to compromise the country's international sovereignty. By the 1970s, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's close relationship with the United States made him seem to many Iranians a puppet of the West, as did his programs to foster secular schools and courts and liberalize conditions for women. This association, Kurzman points out, allowed for the allying of anti-colonial, nationalist, leftist, and religious groups that might otherwise have been fighting one another.

In the years prior to the revolution there was no “crisis of the state,” Kurzman says—no fracturing of the elites or military defections (as we would see later in Eastern Europe). But between 1977 and 1979 economic conditions in Iran collapsed, due in part to a steep fall in world oil prices, and much of the blame fell on the Shah, a common problem for dictators. Islamic groups took two steps that enabled them to challenge the regime, says Kurzman. They linked Islam to nationalism (and anti-Westernism), transforming even the month of Ramadan, which is traditionally identified with personal purification, into a metaphor for the cleansing of the state. And they cultivated a “mosque network” that, like African-American churches in the U.S. Civil Rights movement, served as a powerful mobilizer. There were more than 9,000 mosques in Iran in 1979, says Kurzman; they “reached into every town and village.”

*A Carnival of Revolution:
Central Europe 1989*
By Padraic Kenney (2002)

*Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion
of the Communist Establishment*
By Stephen Kotkin (2009)

Read back to back, these two books encompass a debate over what happened in Eastern Europe to cause communism's collapse there in 1989—another revolution that few observers saw coming. To be sure, the Eastern Bloc states had serious structural flaws: inefficient and outmoded economic programs; increasing indebtedness to and lack of competitiveness with the West; and sclerotic and corrupt political systems. Another contributing factor was the 1989 decision by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to cease underwriting the regimes. But according to Kenney, a historian, it was the citizens of Eastern Europe—the “proletariat”—who toppled the governments.

In Poland and East Germany in particular, there was a history of direct confrontation with governing authority by labor, most famously by Poland's Solidarity trade union. Worker strikes and protests were especially troubling for communist leaders, who claimed to serve “dictatorships of the proletariat.” Another important form of opposition came to be known as the “WiP model,” after a Polish group called *Wolność i Pokój* (Peace and Freedom). It involved small groups undertaking apparently apolitical actions, such as cleaning up city parks, removing graffiti from national monuments, and helping pensioners obtain their benefits. These acts characterized the state less as an object of resistance and more as a figure of irrelevance. They “sharpened the distinctions between state and society, while lowering barriers to participation,” says Kenney—and, with social movements eroding authorities' claims of control, the bankrupt regimes had nowhere to turn, so they imploded.

As inspiring as Kenney's narrative is, it simply is not true, says historian Stephen Kotkin. He maintains that most analysts of the Eastern European revolutions focus “disproportionately . . . on the ‘opposition,’” which they “fantasize” as forming a nascent civil society. Kotkin focuses on

what he calls the “uncivil society,” meaning the ruling elites in the Communist Party—some 5 to 7 percent of the population in most Eastern Bloc countries. He argues that these elites started out in the 1940s believing socialism would remove the causes of social conflict, namely private property and class division. It was, in Kotkin's words, “a heady mix that held awesome power but then disintegrated with uncanny velocity.”

By the 1980s, communism's leaders had lost belief in themselves, mainly due



Two views of Eastern Europe

to the economic shortcomings of their regimes. The states tried becoming exporters of industrial, consumer, and technical products, only to be beaten out by Japan, the Asian Tigers, and China. They tried borrowing their way out of trouble, and in 1989 their debt to Western banks reached \$90 billion. Faced with the end of Soviet support, the Eastern European regimes lost coherence and splintered internally. With the violent exception of the Ceaușescu government in Romania, communist elites negotiated themselves out of power—and often into advantageous positions in the new order. “No surprise there,” Kotkin says. “All revolutions are in some sense revolutions of the deputies.”

*Taking Power: On the Origins of Third
World Revolutions*
By John Foran (2005)

If people revolted whenever they were poor and repressed, revolution would be a global constant. In an analysis of attempted

and failed revolutions that extends over four continents, Foran, a sociologist, identifies essential conditions for revolutionary success. Some can be long-simmering, including what he calls “dependent development,” whereby economic growth in a country is controlled by a narrow elite and often involves the exploitation of natural resources for export, a situation that tends to result in overburdened infrastructure and ever-increasing inequality. Regimes that meet this standard have ranged from the dynastic (the Somozas of Nicaragua, the Assad of Syria) to “guided democracy” (Batista's Cuba).

A marked economic downturn is likely to be the immediate trigger of revolt, says Foran, with what he calls a “world-systemic opening” serving as a portent of revolutionary success. A “world-systemic” opportunity arises when foreign powers are distracted by other events or lose the capacity or will to help a client regime maintain power—as, for example, in 1980 when American hostages in Iran diverted the Carter Administration's attention from revolutionary events unfolding in Nicaragua.

Still, writes Foran, it is difficult to predict when a plummeting economy will cause revolt as opposed to grumbling or despair. Revolt usually occurs when people's subjective understanding of what is tolerable—sometimes termed their “moral economy”—has been violated, fueling a coalescence of opposition that, even as it draws on citizens' shared experiences, is usually cross-class and often multi-ethnic. Such coalitions are nearly always internally fractious, says Foran, as they “struggle among themselves over the shape of the new order.”

Certainly, no one could have predicted that Mohamed Bouazizi, a vegetable peddler frustrated by callous treatment from local officials, would set himself on fire in a small town in Tunisia, nor that his act would spark the “Arab Spring,” however revolutionary those recent events prove to be. ■

Paul Christensen is an adjunct associate professor in the political science department and the author of *Russia's Workers in Transition: Labor, Management, and the State under Gorbachev and Yeltsin* (1999).



Master Teachers

Inside the classrooms of six Boston College faculty

BY WILLIAM BOLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY WAYNE GILBERT

Peter Wilson during Financial Accounting class



At 8:15 ONE WEDNESDAY MORNING LAST JANUARY, most of the 40 students in G. Peter Wilson's 8:30 Financial Accounting class were already present. Wilson waited a minute or two longer, surveyed the Fulton Hall lecture room occupied mostly by freshmen in the Carroll School of Management, and said: "Let's do it." All heads turned toward a bingo cage on a wooden bench at the front of the room. The professor gave the toy a spin and yanked out a numbered yellow ball—indicating the study group that would report on its research momentarily. Then he rolled a red dice. "And the lucky number is two," he announced, signaling the student who would deliver the group's brief presentation. In the back of the room a young man pumped his fist and exclaimed, "Yes!"



Wilson students (clockwise from top left): Lisette Torres '11, Chris Marciniak '13, Anna Minkow '11, Shawn Rezendes '13, and Karolina Cyburt '14

As the room filled again with chatter, Wilson, who holds the Joseph L. Sweeney Chair of Accounting, strode to the back row to quietly dispense words of advice and encouragement to the student, Alexander Hevia '13, a history major from the College of Arts and Sciences. After the coaching, Hevia huddled with members of his team and flipped through their written assignment on the topic of the day, which was corporate balance sheets and how they are analyzed across industries. At 8:30, he stepped to the front of the room with a single sheet of sparse notes and, achieving a conversational tone, ranged lucidly across the balance sheets of companies such as Google, Jet Blue, and Gap. Having heard enough after a few minutes, Wilson motioned to the class. "What do you think?" he asked and led a round of applause.

Peter Wilson believes (as do many education researchers) that collaborative activity fosters learning. It is for this reason that he assigns students to groups at the start of a semester. But he also knows that when a crew of five divides up the work each student will dig deeply into roughly 20 percent of the material. "I want them to teach each other before they come back to class," he says. And so he insti-

tuted the regime of the bingo cage and the dice, to spur his students to learn the full assignment. The students arrive early because of his habit of drawing the first numbers 10 minutes before class begins, which he does to get a head start. (There are usually two or three more drawings on the same day, without time for preparation.) The opportunity of a little advance warning, however, scarcely explains Hevia's reaction to "winning." "I knew the stuff. I had to know the stuff," the student from Miami said later. "And I guess I felt happy I could show it."

This practice of random selection was repeated frequently throughout the semester, whenever group assignments were due. "Fifty percent of teaching is incentives," Wilson said after one class meeting. "If you can get students to prepare, they'll want to participate." The other half, Wilson believes, is intrinsic motivation. He speaks of sharing his lifelong passion for his subject as the key to nurturing self-motivation. An example of his success is Michelle Mittelsteadt, MBA'01, who began her studies at the Carroll School, she says, not expecting to actually like accounting. She was a Ph.D. chemist, intent on becoming a research-and-development manager. Then, in her first semester, in

the fall of 1999, she enrolled in Wilson's required class. "He made it exciting," she recalls. "It totally changed what I wanted to do." Today she's a financial analyst at Ernst & Young in Boston.

At most schools, at most levels of education, you will find master teachers, as they are sometimes called—those with a special flair for drawing students into their subject and stimulating a desire to learn. *Boston College Magazine* invited the deans of six of the University's schools to identify persons of such consequence among their faculties. The list was trimmed with other factors in mind, such as allowing for a range of lecture styles and classroom settings, with the result that six teachers were selected—one from each school—who may help turn light on what it means to teach exceedingly well at a contemporary university in the Jesuit liberal arts tradition.

The six are Peter Wilson of the Carroll School, Judith Shindul-Rothschild of the Connell School of Nursing, Diana C. Pullin of the Lynch School of Education, Mary Joe Hughes of the Arts and Sciences Honors Program, James R. Repetti of the Law School, and Daniel J. Harrington, SJ, of the School of Theology and Ministry. They opened their classroom doors to journalistic coverage and sat for interviews on the teaching life over the 2010–11 academic year.

AT A TIME WHEN NEARLY EVERYONE SEEMS TO have a hard-held opinion on teacher performance in grades K through 12 (often tied to student standardized-test scores), there is surprisingly little attention paid to the qualities of an exceptional teacher at the higher levels of education, especially at major research universities, where other priorities such as contributions to a scholarly community and campus intellectual life must be weighed. There have been, to be sure, numbers-based efforts to gauge the overall effectiveness of a university education, though far from all schools have subscribed to them. The largest of these, the National Survey of Student Engagement, tracks students' (self-reported) involvement in "programs and activities" in and out of the classroom, asking questions, say, about the frequency of one-on-one discussions with professors. The Educational Testing Service began administering its outcome oriented Academic Profile test of "general education student learning" to students at participating U.S. colleges and universities in 1990; the current iteration, called the ETS Proficiency Profile, measures "critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics." More recently, in January 2011, the Lumina Foundation for Education—a private organization with assets exceeding \$1 billion dedicated to expanding the U.S. college-educated population—issued its framework for defining "quality in American higher education." Called the Degree Qualifications Profile,

it sets out benchmarks for student progress in "five basic areas of learning: broad, integrative knowledge; specialized knowledge; intellectual skills; applied learning; and civic learning." For the most part, these programs do not directly address the ways of good teaching. Nor, it's possible to argue, does the State of Texas's recent effort to gauge university faculty "productivity" by means of figures such as number-of-students-taught and external-research-funding. Certainly, an economist's 2003 study showing that good-looking professors garner more favorable evaluations from students offers scant guidance.

Donald L. Hafner, a political scientist and vice-provost for undergraduate academic affairs at Boston College, suspects that answering the question of what qualifies as masterly teaching may in part come down to the Potter Stewart principle. This is the I-can't-define-it-but-I-know-it-when-I-see-it criterion put forward by the Supreme Court justice in his 1964 concurring opinion regarding illegal obscenity.

"There's a tendency to suppose that highly effective teachers are flashy in the classroom, and that might well be" in many cases, says Hafner. "But flashiness alone won't draw a student into repeatedly going back to the material and thinking about it in a deep way." That's the key, according to Hafner and many researchers who underscore the importance of what is known in the literature as "time on task," or how often a student is drawn back to the subject matter. Getting students to think often about a subject "requires a kind of charisma, but not necessarily a flashy formal presentation," Hafner says. With the possible exception of Wilson and his bingo props, none of the professors profiled in this article would come across to anyone as flashy. And Wilson, gray-haired, balding, and bespectacled, who teaches Financial Accounting with his wife, Caroline (she helps manage the class, but does not lecture), keeps the focus in class ever on students and the academic content. He is also quick to alter the dynamics of the classroom. At one point last May, during a meeting of Financial Accounting, the pace of student responses to his rapid-fire questions started to lag (Wilson had begun the class noting that the last group paper reached his email box at 4:59 A.M., a minute before deadline; some students were undoubtedly tired). So he told the class, "Okay, huddle up." Whenever he feels the energy flagging, he explained in an interview later, he sends students back into their study groups to tackle the question at hand. "And you can see the energy come back and bubble up," he said.

Students will point out—rightly—that teaching moments go beyond the classroom. Wilson, for instance, is known for a dogged pursuit of internships for his students; and most students interviewed said their respective professors had called or e-mailed them asking that they come in and talk, whether about a missed class, a disappointing grade,

or some other academic matter. For the purposes of this article, however, it will be the challenges of the classroom that are front and center.

FOR JUDITH SHINDUL-ROTHSCHILD, ASSOCIATE professor in the Connell School of Nursing, the challenge is to engage students productively in material that is often disturbing. Her zone of expertise is mental health, and the topic of her Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Theory class for juniors, bright and early on a Monday morning in February, was major depression.

"You guys did a great job on the quiz last night during the Super Bowl—and nobody mentioned to me that it was during the Super Bowl," Shindul-Rothschild said at the start of the three-hour lesson, chuckling along with the 35 students in the all-female class at the oversight. She routinely administers 60-minute online quizzes that cover the reading assignments and help students prepare for the three-hour, once-a-week class.

The professor's tone changed quickly as she began enumerating the characteristics of major depression. People with this condition are not merely suffering from mood swings; and they are not psychotic, which involves delusional behavior, she explained. Long-term sadness or other negative feelings can render them unable to fulfill basic

responsibilities, such as going to school or work or functioning as parents. Here, Shindul-Rothschild hammered at a point she would repeat more than once before the class was over, raising her voice suddenly each time and accenting almost every word: "You always have to ask [the patient]: Are you thinking of hurting yourself? And if the answer is yes, you have to go after the details."

Shindul-Rothschild never sits. She walks around the room, though not precipitously, strolling the aisles and making eye contact with students. Her manner is as serious as the topics she takes up each week, such as trauma, abuse, and psychosis, all of which her students will encounter as nurses, regardless of specialty. She lets the students sit in silence as they absorb her questions—questions that might be too close for comfort, particularly when the subject turns to eating disorders, childhood grief, or the effects of anxiety and depression on families. Behind her is a large screen with PowerPoint slides tracking the lesson, but the technology is not center stage. The students already have their own copies of every slide in every presentation for the semester, contained in white binders that usually sit atop their desks.

At each turn in the class on depression, the nursing professor prompted her students to connect the research to their clinical assignments at Boston-area hospitals and to their future practice. She asked if anyone was doing clinical work in the oncology unit at Children's Hospital, and five or six hands went up. "Do you ever see sad parents? Are they depressed?" A young woman answered that she saw a mother crying in the hallway the week before—but not in the room with her child. "Great example," the teacher responded. "They fall apart in the hall, but they pull it together to care for their children." This should not be confused with major depression, she pointed out.

Near the end of the class, Shindul-Rothschild gave the example of an older patient who asks a nurse: "Why should I live? Everyone has either died or abandoned me—what's the point?" The professor put the question to the students: "What do you say to that person?"

There were no takers, and Shindul-Rothschild rephrased the question a few times. A student, pensively curling a strand of hair around her finger, began to say something and then stopped. By then, Shindul-Rothschild was speaking almost in a whisper, and yet she was heard clearly, in the silence of the Cushing Hall classroom. She stopped talking, and walked slowly across the room.

After a long minute, she told her students firmly: "Do something simple. You don't have to answer the question about the meaning of life. But you have to convey to them that their life means everything to you at this moment." Her voice became soft again. "Sit with them. Don't leave them alone. Be a presence," she advised. "That's how you give patients meaning, give them hope."



Nursing student Morine Ceibert '12



Shindul-Rothschild with members of her Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Theory class

Two other times during this class, the pattern of questioning and quiet recurred—including when Shindul-Rothschild shared an experience from her practice as a young nurse in a psychiatric ward in Boston. She was caring for a college student who persuaded her and the other young nurses that he had turned a corner in his treatment and should be given a day pass to go shopping, which was granted. The patient walked out the door, went across the street, and jumped off a tall building.

In an interview later, Shindul-Rothschild explained those moments of stillness in the classroom. “I’m very cautious about breaking the silence,” she said. “I know that if they’re silent, it’s for a reason. It’s not because they don’t have the knowledge, but because it’s difficult to talk about.” She added, “And they’re reflecting.”

Outside of class, Shindul-Rothschild’s manner is much the same—warm and supportive, yet sober and intense. In her third-floor office in Cushing, she tells of how she decided to become a nurse. She was 15 years old and in a waiting room in a South Shore Massachusetts hospital when she heard a Code Blue emergency order announced for her father, who had suffered his third heart attack. She

charged up to his room and, amid the chaos of resuscitation, began praying and crying. A nurse grabbed her, took her into a coat closet and held her, saying, “Your father is a strong man.” Her father survived (and lived to a ripe old age), and Shindul-Rothschild says she was so affected by the compassion and professionalism of the nursing team that she decided to apply, two years later, to the nursing school at Boston College, from which she graduated in 1975.

Her own experiences are never distant from class instruction. She’s quick to share hard lessons she’s learned and mistakes she’s made as a practitioner, and in an interview she spoke again of the young man who leaped to his death and of the signs he gave of his intentions that the young nurses should have read, such as handing off personal items to friends. “It gives me the chills to think about it, to this day,” she said, gazing out a window with a view of Alumni Stadium.

When asked about the aims of her courses, she tells of students who are able to marshal a wide range of skills and leverage a storehouse of knowledge, all in the service of “easing suffering and giving hope.” Her students need all the insight and inspiration they can muster before they enter

locked psychiatric units during the clinical portions of their training. Calli Gilbride '12, who took Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Theory last spring, explains what that's like. "When you first walk into a clinical, it's terrifying," said the student from Wisconsin, before walking back her remark just a bit. "Well, it's an uncomfortable feeling. Basically you can't get out. You feel vulnerable."

But, Gilbride adds, her fears were allayed somewhat by vivid recollections of Shindul-Rothschild's lectures, including the professor's constant message (as rendered by Gilbride), "They're all people. They're going to respond to your kindness." The student recalls a patient, a young man with schizophrenia, who was withdrawn from everyone and initially unresponsive to her questions until she drew on another lesson repeatedly taught by Shindul-Rothschild: "You'll never get anything out of such a person by just talking. You have to be creative," as Gilbride relates. She played cards with the man, and after a couple of weeks, he began to smile and talk. According to Gilbride (who is intentionally vague due to confidentiality concerns), she learned details about his family situation that affected the plan for his discharge from the hospital.

ANDY BOYNTON, DEAN OF THE CARROLL SCHOOL of Management, says that good teachers care about teaching, which may sound needlessly obvious until one considers other factors in play at a research university. Boynton says he feels compelled to inform prospective faculty members that if they're looking for a felicitous place to carry out research and teach mainly as an afterthought, they've come knocking on the wrong door. "We want great teaching and great research, and we hire people to do both," he stresses. When a scholar doesn't particularly enjoy being in the classroom, Boynton says, students generally figure this out "about five minutes into the first class of the semester."

That said, the master teachers identified by the deans for this article tend to be accomplished researchers and scholars as well. In 2011 alone, Shindul-Rothschild, for instance, has had five papers published as articles in academic journals or chapters in books, on subjects ranging from community mental health nursing and substance abuse to schizophrenia, pharmacology, and collective bargaining in the nursing profession. Her articles can be found among the readings for one or more of her three classes this fall, including both the undergraduate and graduate Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Theory courses and Transition to Professional

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It is a sly smile.*

Nursing, the last core course taken by undergraduate nursing students. Currently she is investigating eating disorders—developing screening tools for school nurses to identify young men and women who may be at risk for anorexia or bulimia.

In 2009, the Lynch School's Diana Pullin was one of 44 scholars to be named an American Educational Research Association Fellow, in recognition of her exceptional contributions to scholarship. As a lawyer, Pullin has argued many education-law cases in state and federal courts and

was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court. As a researcher, she has focused on such areas as testing and the law, the rights of students, assessment of teacher performance, and bullying. "A few years ago, I hardly talked about bullying," says Pullin, and now the problem is part of her education law class. Her research flows quickly into the classroom, she says: "It's a constantly interactive process."

Each semester, Pullin teaches Education Law and Public Policy to approximately 25 graduate students, usually in a Fulton Hall classroom. During sessions of this 4:30 to 6:50 P.M. class, she seems perpetually and pleasantly occupied with the thoughts put forward by her pupils. Typically, a third of the students are from the Law School. Most of the others come to Chestnut Hill after putting in workdays at elementary or secondary schools or area colleges, typically as administrators. Pullin addresses them all as practitioners who might be acting on behalf of students or school systems, now or in the not-too-distant future.

When an idea is broached by a student, she will ponder, smile, and walk slowly to the side of the room, legal pad in hand. It is a sly smile. What normally follows is a forward thrust into dialogue as Pullin challenges the speaker to peel back a layer of argument or dig deeper into the factual matter. Brushfires of constructive conversation tend to erupt in different sections of the room before she pulls the class back together. The group is engaged.

To start off a meeting of the class in late February, Pullin showed a YouTube video of student protestors at the University of California, Irvine, disrupting a public talk by the Israeli ambassador. The day's focus was free speech, and Pullin's students had prepared by reading Supreme Court decisions delineating the rights and limits to speech in schools.

"Neither students nor teachers leave their rights behind at the schoolhouse door," Pullin told the class, whose members appeared to be mostly in their twenties and thirties. In the course of the discussion, one student declaimed

that school districts have no right to limit free expression. After a sidewise, pondering look, Pullin pressed him to precisely define expression protected by the Constitution as distinct from speech that disrupts the school environment and is therefore unprotected. The words “black arm band” bubbled up from a wildcat conversation at the other end of the room, bearing on a 1969 court ruling in favor of high school students in Des Moines, Iowa, who wore the symbol of mourning in silent protest of the Vietnam War.

Catching that wave, Pullin scanned the room for clothing that might constitute political expression, and found her way to a young woman in the back row sporting an “FBI” cap. Unexpectedly, it stood for “Fire Bush Initiative,” explained the student, April Robinson, JD’11. Robinson was also wearing a Spelman College sweatshirt as a 2007 alumna of that historically African American women’s institution. Does the sweatshirt count as political expression? Pullin asked. “Yes,” said Robinson. “It shows I support black

as well as white higher education.” A moment later, Pullin was challenging another outspoken member of the class to think harder about speech that may not be protectable under the high court’s standards.

In an interview near the end of the semester, Robinson remarked that she has rarely been in a class where there was such “continuous discourse” before, during, and after the lessons. “We linger when class is over,” she said, referring to threads of classroom discussion that get picked up afterward. “We walk in with our minds made up and our opinions formed. And we walk out with our eyebrows a little scuffed, thinking we have to go do some more research.”

Pullin says her manner in the classroom is notably different from what it was in the courtroom, where she could be, like any other good litigator, adversarial and argumentative. From the mid-1970s to the late 1980s she successfully argued a number of high-profile cases including *Debra P. v. Turlington*, in which a federal appeals court in Atlanta ruled



Pullin on research and teaching: “It’s a constantly interactive process.”



Hughes and honors student Alexandra Savinkina '13

that certain kinds of high-stakes testing in secondary schools could be discriminatory. She considers her teaching, begun at the Lynch School in 1982—she served as dean from 1987 to 1994—a natural outflow of her education-law practice, “seamlessly integrated with the rest of my work” (her practice now mostly involves advising other attorneys who go into court). But Pullin makes a conscious effort to avoid the courtroom style in class.

“You have to create a culture in which there is an ease of conversation about deeply fraught and intellectually challenging issues. And if I don’t look comfortable doing it, they won’t feel comfortable talking about it,” she says. Pullin gives students their say, but she dismisses what she calls an “anything-goes approach” in which all comments are considered adequate: “You can feel a certain way about X, but what’s an informed reflection on X?”

No small part of her goal is to bring students to a place where, as school administrators, they can make informed judgments about legal disputes that arise, and not retreat from a policy or practice simply because of a lawsuit threat. She emphasizes, “I want them to be able to say: ‘You could sue me, but I’m doing it because it’s the right thing to do.’”

IN A GROUND-FLOOR STUDY LOUNGE OF THE residence hall known as 110 St. Thomas More Road, Mary Joe Hughes meets with the 14 students in her sophomore honors seminar. It is early May, and the usual venue for the class, Gasson Hall, is temporarily swathed in scaffolding.

The topic of the seminar is as broad as it is unresolved: Western Cultural Tradition. The yearlong course is a grand tour of literary, philosophical, and social-science classics beginning in the Enlightenment with Immanuel Kant’s *Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), extending through works by Shelley, Marx, Freud, and Dostoevsky, and ending at the dawn of modernism with Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (published in stages and finally as a whole in 1902).

With her coiffed white hair, beaded necklaces, and long flowing scarves over wool jackets, Hughes always looks well put-together—professorial yet slightly bohemian. She began teaching in the honors program in 1979 (three years after earning her Ph.D. in history at Harvard), and has served as the program’s assistant director since 1987. Two words that often surface in student evaluations of her teach-

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about teaching,
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research university.*

ing are “passion” and “enthusiasm,” and Hughes conveyed both qualities at the start of class that morning.

“For some reason, I’m obsessed with this scene. I think it’s one of the great scenes of Western literature,” she said a little excitedly to her sophomores, using her hands to accent key words. The scene was from *Heart of Darkness*—the one where a physician, “an unshaven little man in a threadbare coat,” measures the skull of the main character, who is preparing for a journey to Africa. The doctor explains that he always does this, out of scientific

interest, when examining someone bound for the Dark Continent. Asked if he repeats the head measurement after travelers return, the physician smiles cryptically. “Oh, I never see them,” he says, and adds, “Moreover, the changes take place inside, you know.”

Crowded with her students around a rectangular table, with a view of white-flowering *Magnolia stellata* out expansive windows on two sides, Hughes tossed out the first question: “What do you think?” In her classes she makes a point of starting off with easy, open-ended queries, to get the conversation going. Soon enough, professor and students began the harder, collaborative work of interpretation, probing Conrad’s critique of Western values as fixated on measurement and quantification.

In true liberal arts fashion, Hughes invited the students to bring in perspectives from other classes, and evidently she knew the other classes they were taking. She looked expectantly at a young man wearing a Red Sox cap, and he leveraged a lesson from his history course, making the connection that Conrad’s doctor is like Robert McNamara, the Vietnam War-era defense secretary who purportedly ignored any realities of the war that were not reducible to hard data. Other students chimed in with analogies from other disciplines, including psychology (a reference to the quest to measure personality through Myers-Brigg questionnaires), biology (drawing a link between evolution and Conrad’s descriptions of supposedly primitive practices), and economics (an observation about how an economy can be awful but still not meet the technical definition of a recession). Hughes seemed pleased with the excursions but moved to cut off that thread of conversation—“I think we’ve established that Conrad is talking about measuring the unmeasurable.”

After plowing further through the last stretch of the novel (this was the third and final meeting devoted to *Heart of Darkness*), the time came for Hughes to go to the whiteboard and encapsulate the understandings gleaned from it. These issued forth from the students, who were nudged ever

so slightly by Hughes toward essential themes and “truths” claimed by the author, including the darkness of human nature, the blurred lines between civilization and savagery, and the hollowness at the center of humanity. A couple of students alluded to Conrad’s feeling that looks deceive, and Hughes scrawled the word “appearances.”

“It’s a delicate balance,” she said after class. “You want to make sure they’re understanding certain things.” But, she continued, you also want to disabuse them of the notion that there’s “just one way to interpret the text and it’s the teacher’s way, and she’s not telling them.” That’s why Hughes goes to the board and allows the dialogue to engender a surfeit of interpretations, some less essential than others. “It may seem like a mess,” she says, “but they’re making the ideas concrete, and they’re building on each other’s interpretations. They’re seeing that you can always go deeper into the text.”

Interviewed in her office in Carney some time later, questions about her teaching style met, at first, with a shrug of the shoulders. “I think you have to be yourself,” she responded. “You can’t play a role you don’t believe. I’ve always been a little suspicious of showmanship in the classroom.” This, however, does not mean assuming exactly the same role in every seminar conversation. Hughes says her intention is to “disappear as much as possible” into the dialogue, but she is typically more able to do that with juniors who take her higher-level seminars—20th Century and the Tradition, for

instance. During a meeting of this class addressing Jean Paul Sartre’s existentialist ethics, the students carried much of the conversation forward on their own, with Hughes going to the board at key moments to clarify questions, define terms, and jot down a word or phrase in French. She occasionally remarked “good point” or “not quite right.”

This was not always her style. Hughes recalls that during her early years at Boston College she was “much more controlling” during the discussions, but through those exchanges and her glimpses into what students can gain from deep interaction with one another in the classroom, she came to feel that part of her purpose as a teacher was to simply “not get in the way of them learning to think,” as she puts it. “I’m not loosey-goosey now,” she adds with a smile. “I want them to grapple with critical questions about the text. Beyond that, I let them wander from one topic to another, and I bring them back if they go off the rails.”

Brittany Bachant ’13, a math major from central Massachusetts who was part of the Western Cultural Tradition seminar last spring, notes that she had read *Heart of Darkness* in high school and came away with the understanding that it’s about the evils of European colonialism (an accepted if incomplete interpretation) and little else. That wasn’t enough to grab her interest. But she said that, in the seminar, “I was struck by the beauty of the writing and the many different ways of interpreting the text. Professor Hughes just brought all that out for me.”

Bachant, who contributed several comments during the Conrad discussion, including one about the author’s foreshadowing of environmental destruction (in the European settlers who ravaged African land), said she had always been quiet in class—until setting foot in Hughes’s seminar. “From day one, she made everyone feel at home and able to participate. I’m pretty sure every single person in the class spoke up every time we met,” Bachant said.



Repetti: Instead of a plague of lawyers on earth, benefits

EIGHT YEARS AGO, BOSTON COLLEGE PUBLISHED its “Pocket Guide to Jesuit Education,” a 10-page brochure that describes the process of being educated in the Jesuit tradition—of acquiring habits of attentiveness and intellectual reflection and positive action. A strong theme of the guide is education of “the whole person”: the idea that an individual can’t be viewed as whole if he or she lacks “an educated solidarity with other human beings, in their hopes and fears and especially in their needs.”

This sentiment is not typically associated with the pressure cooker known as law school. The stereotype of a law professor is the imperious Charles W. Kingsfield, the character played by John Houseman in the 1973 film *The Paper Chase*, which accurately portrayed a version of the Socratic method that blends instruction and intimidation.



Tax I students (from left), third-year Charles Carrington, Marc Burton JD'11, and third-year Lauren Campbell

Teaching his Federal Income Tax of Individuals class at Boston College Law School on a Monday morning in March, James Repetti is, his dark blue suit notwithstanding, the anti-Kingsfield. A hard-nosed scholar to be sure, he has coauthored many volumes and articles with titles such as *Partnership Income Taxation* (2011), *Introduction to United States International Taxation* (2005), and "Textualism and Tax Shelters" (2004). But with his soothing voice and kindly deportment the holder of the William J. Kenealy, SJ, chair manages to exert a calm influence over a lecture room packed with five dozen second-year law students. "It's about creating an environment where they'll feel comfortable, empowered, self-confident," Repetti, a 1980 Boston College Law graduate, said immediately after class in his office. "You're teaching the whole person intellectually, but you're also building character. I hope that by seeing me treat them respectfully they'll go on to treat others the same way. So instead of a plague of lawyers on earth, we'll have some positive benefits," he said with a laugh, as though he were putting in a tall order.

At the same time, Repetti, who was a running back (for Harvard) in the early 1970s and is built like one, does not

let up as he impels his students through the arcane ways and byways of tax-law analysis. To "keep things moving" in the hour-long sessions of Socratic give-and-take three days a week, he says, he appoints in advance what he likes to call "co-counsels" for each meeting, two or three students he will call upon frequently, especially when the answers are slow in coming from others. The co-counsels are expected to be ready.

Repetti's approach to what can be mind-numbingly detailed tax case studies often includes the spirited hypothetical. During a session early in the spring, the topic in his class was prizes and scholarships, and Repetti called up scenarios such as winning a football scholarship to Boston College, collecting the Nobel Peace Prize, and walking off *Wheel of Fortune* with an all-expenses-paid trip to New Jersey. Each example carried a different ramification for legal argument and at least one exception to the taxation rule.

At a few turns in the lecture, Repetti paused briefly to ask the students, "Is everyone comfortable with that?" He mostly stood at the podium but dipped several times to his left or right, leaning over as though looking for something in the rows. After class, he explained that he was maneuver-



Elton Letang, C.Ss.R., (foreground) and fellow students in Harrington's class on apocalyptic literature

ing to make eye contact around the walls of open laptops on desks, searching for confused looks.

Repetti gives notice that his exams will include questions about made-up cases, which will demand a knowledge deeper than rote memorization of lecture notes and readings. He says that he aims for his courses to embody a teaching philosophy borrowed from the late Daniel Degnan, SJ, a law professor with whom he crossed paths at Boston College in the late 1980s. "Love your students to death, work your students to death," Degnan had advised the young law professor. In the Jesuit tradition of education, as the "Pocket Guide" notes, these commandments are mutually inclusive: Love, which must be entwined with communication, is epitomized in action.

AT THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY IN a cupola-topped building on the Brighton Campus, Daniel Harrington, SJ, also practices what he calls "old-style Jesuit teaching," a pedagogy he first learned as a student at Boston College High School more than 55 years ago. "It's an orderly and engaged style," says the professor

of New Testament studies. "Tell the students what you're going to do. Do it. And tell them you just did it."

Harrington is a preeminent Catholic biblical authority, one of an elite group of researchers who, by their translations and commentaries, helped puzzle out the mysteries of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947. The title of a relevant volume coauthored by Harrington in 2000 would be largely indecipherable to a generally intelligent reader—*Qumran Cave 4: XXIV: 4QInstruction (Sapiential Texts), Part 2 (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert)*. The discussions in the 632-page book, published by Oxford University Press and selling on Amazon for the discounted price of \$255.50, are technical. Harrington, however, also writes popular books on scriptural subjects, including one published this year, *Meeting St. John Today: Understanding the Man, His Mission, and His Message*. In the classroom, his delivery is colloquial, a style he attributes partly to the fact that he's a preacher as well as a teacher and delivers homilies every Sunday at local parishes. "That's been a great discipline for me. It's helped me enormously in my writing and teaching," he says.

Redacting a Dead Sea Scroll fragment in his Wisdom Literature lecture class last fall, one that speaks metaphori-

cally of “seductresses,” Harrington quipped to his students, “Only Dr. Freud perhaps can explain all these things, but it is what it is.” During an Apocalyptic Literature class in the spring, the avuncular Jesuit offered three questions that memorably summed up that biblical tradition: “Who’s in charge? Why is there evil in the world? And what time is it?”

Harrington, however, is not particularly animated in class. There wouldn’t be much call for that. When he is dissecting a scriptural passage with his students, whether in a seminar or in a 50-student lecture class, all heads are down, all eyes on the text. The interpretations require frequent digressions—into history, archeology, ancient languages—and the students look up only when Harrington puts words on the chalkboard, usually in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek. No one is more engrossed in the textual material than the man at the front of the room. “I don’t try to put on a show, because I can’t,” Harrington says matter-of-factly in an interview. “I try to initiate students into the wonderful world of the text.”

At the close of a three-hour lesson on the Dead Sea Scrolls just before the Thanksgiving break, the students rose from their seats and, rather than heading toward the door, gave their professor a long round of applause. Asked about this later, Harrington said they were demonstrating the allure of the subject matter. His students are less quick to separate the scholar from the scholarship.

“This is why I took the class with him,” says Jennifer

Moakler, a first-year master’s student, referring to Harrington’s scholarly accomplishments. “He brings all of that research to us, into the class.” Moakler, who also took the Apocalyptic Literature class in the spring and would like to work in a parish or diocese as a liturgy director, adds that the material itself may at times seem dry, “but he makes you see why it matters and how it all works. With Fr. Harrington, you really feel you’re part of a larger intellectual community.” That, she says, is why she joined in the applause.

THE SIX FACULTY MEMBERS PROFILED HERE HAVE all received honors for their teaching—as have many other professors not named in this article. Nominated by his students, Peter Wilson, who has taught at Boston College since coming from MIT in 1997, has twice in the last three years received the Teaching with New Media Award for innovations in delivering course content (innovations much advanced by Caroline Wilson, he would be first to note). Connell School seniors bestowed on Judith Shindul-Rothschild a 2011 Award for Outstanding Teaching and Mentorship. Mary Hughes was honored with the Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Award at Boston College in 1990 and was invited by students to deliver a so-called Last Lecture in 2009. (The title alludes to the lecture’s purpose of imparting big ideas, not a speaker’s impending departure.) Diana Pullin received the University’s Distinguished Teacher Award in 2004. And in 1999 law students elected James Repetti the first professor to receive their school’s award for teaching excellence. As for Daniel Harrington, after publishing more than 40 books and teaching at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology for close to 40 years and at Boston College for one year, he was given an honorary degree by this University in 2009.

When pressed to explain his teaching techniques, Harrington speaks generally of a constant passion and enthusiasm yoked to the subject matter. “It’s nothing technical,” he says. “I just love this stuff. I want to keep learning about it. And I want to help people understand it better.”

Asked in his turn, Peter Wilson, the buoyant number-cruncher, describes an empirically elusive goal, that of encouraging a larger sense of meaning and purpose in his students. Wilson’s final two Financial Accounting meetings of the semester are always devoted to reflection upon lessons learned. (And, yes, he draws numbers to pick the student presenters.) A few times during the penultimate session last spring, he told the students in these and other words, “It’s really not about accounting.” In those instances, the lesson was apt to be about collaborative work, or the underrated value of making mistakes and then thinking through them, or lifelong learning. These are the lessons, it seems, that good teachers know. ■



Harrington initiating students in “the wonderful world of the text”

The collector

Photographs by Gary Wayne Gilbert

Andrew Nelson '02 grew up in a house attached to the Ash Street Jail in New Bedford, Massachusetts, built in 1888 and thought to be the oldest continually operating jail in the United States (Lizzie Borden was held there in 1892 while on trial for the murder of her parents). You could say a passion for history came to him naturally.

His father, a former sheriff, is now an antique book dealer, with "an incredible collection of New Bedford maritime items," says Nelson. "I just thought [of] doing the same for Boston College"—an enthusiasm, he says, that has "spiraled out of control" since graduation.

As the manager of online operations for his father's business, Nelson uses his connections to build his collection by means of estate sales and sports memorabilia shows. He has amassed more than 5,000 Boston College artifacts: postcards, football game programs, photographs, pins, yearbooks—pretty much anything with the words "Boston College" on it. He keeps his collection in plastic bins and binders in a 12-by-12-foot spare room in his house.

Nelson's favorite item comes with a story. Prior to the 1940 Cotton Bowl in Dallas, Boston College's first bowl game, the football team was invited to dine at the home of Vice President John Nance Garner, and, for whatever reason, a copy of the 1939 biography *Mr. Garner of Texas* was passed around. "Everyone—the players, all the staff, all the reporters traveling with the team—signed it," says Nelson. "It's a one-of-a-kind." He found it at a bookstore in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Nelson says he "can't imagine ever being done with collecting," As long as there are attics and basements, "there will always be gems that turn up."

—Tim Czerwinski



INSET: Nelson with collectibles. OPPOSITE: Football programs from the 1930s through 1950s. Nelson has 204 game programs. The oldest heralds the November 30, 1929, contest with Holy Cross.









OPPOSITE, TOP: The Boston College Eagle Rock Festival was organized in 1970 to raise \$300,000 for what newspapers at the time called an 8,000-seat "entertainment dome" on campus. The event, planned for Alumni Stadium, never happened. Boston mayor Kevin White scuttled it two days before it was to take place. Led Zeppelin played a makeup at Boston Garden three weeks later. Nelson acquired this ticket from a Rhode Island woman whose mother wouldn't allow her to attend the rescheduled show (the ticket had languished in a shoebox for 39 years). The "other attractions" were to include the Allman Brothers, the Stooges, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and the Buddy Guy Blues Band. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Press passes and football ticket stubs. At left of center is a press pass for a 1924 game against the Haskell Indians from Lawrence, Kansas. It features the warning "Ladies Not Admitted to Press Box." ABOVE: Train menus and dinner programs. Special trains were chartered to transport Boston College fans to the 1940 Cotton Bowl game in Dallas (see lower left; also, right of center) and to the 1941 Sugar Bowl game in New Orleans (center, right). At lower right is the program from a testimonial dinner honoring Mike Holovak '43, who would serve as Boston College's head coach from 1950 to 1959. RIGHT: John F. Fitzgerald ("Honey Fitz")—mayor of Boston, U.S. Congressman, and grandfather of a U.S. president and two senators—attended Boston College in 1879, leaving, as he said, "only because failing health compelled me to do so." In postcards issued around 1910 as Fitzgerald ran for mayor, his portrait looms over Boston City Hall. Mayoral campaign buttons and a book of sheet music for the "John F. Fitzgerald March" (1909) are part of Nelson's larger collection of campaign memorabilia from 190 alumni representing 12 decades.



The whole truth

How an advertisement in the *New York Times* changed legal history

BY MARY-ROSE PAPANDREA

Although some foundational Supreme Court decisions—*Brown v. Board of Education*, for instance—have been the result of meticulous planning by activists who aggressively sought to change America through the judicial system, other equally important cases have ended up before the Court almost by accident, their parties focused more on winning the dispute at hand than on any broader ramifications a victory might bring. This is an account of one of the most influential Supreme Court cases in history, *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan*. It was a case indisputably a product of its times, with largely unforeseen consequences.

—New York Times editorial
January 20, 1999

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tinued, "by an unprecedented wave of terror by those who would deny and negate that document." The advertisement went on:

In Montgomery, Alabama, after students sang "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" on the State Capitol steps, their leaders were expelled from school, and truckloads of police armed with shotguns and tear gas ringed the Alabama State College Campus. When the entire student body protested to state authorities by refusing to re-register, their dining hall was padlocked in an attempt to starve them into submission.

The advertisement then described other incidents of violence and repression:

Again and again the Southern violators have answered Dr. King's peaceful protests with intimidation and violence. They have bombed his home almost killing his wife and child. They have assaulted his person. They have arrested him seven times—for "speeding," "loitering," and similar "offenses." And now they have charged him with "perjury"—a felony under which they could imprison him for ten years. . . .

Nowhere in the text did the advertisement name or refer to any specific individuals responsible for harassing Dr. King or terrorizing the students.

The advertisement also listed the names of 64 people who supported it. These names included several famous public figures, such as Marlon Brando, Nat King Cole, Sammy Davis Jr., Eleanor Roosevelt, and Jackie Robinson. In addition, some time after the *Times* accepted the advertisement and before it was published, Bayard Rustin, the executive director of the committee and a leader in the civil rights movement, added to it the names of 20 southern leaders—all but two of whom were ministers. Included among them were the Reverends Ralph David Abernathy, S.S. Seay, Fred Shuttlesworth, and Joseph Lowery, all Alabama residents. Rustin decided that it would be unnecessary to get these men's consent, because they all clearly supported the cause.

The *Times's* advertising acceptability department did not check the accuracy of statements in the advertisement against *New York Times* stories on file or through any other means. No one at the newspaper ever asked the individuals listed in the advertisement whether they had consented to the use of their names.

As it turned out, the committee's advertisement contained some inaccurate statements that were slightly inconsistent with the *Times's* own reporting. Among them: Alabama State College students did demonstrate on the State Capitol steps, but they sang the National Anthem, not "My Country 'Tis of Thee." Although nine student leaders of the civil rights demonstrations in Montgomery were expelled from school, they were not expelled for demon-

strating at the State Capitol, but for their participation in a sit-in at a snack shop in a local courthouse some days before. The dining hall was never padlocked, although in response to enormous pressure from state officials the school did ban unregistered students from the cafeteria. And at no time did the police "ring" the campus. Rather, the police were called to campus three times in response to student demonstrations protesting the expulsion of the nine student leaders. In one instance, the police blocked students who, shepherd by school administrators, were trying to leave the campus. When the students stepped onto a side street, they encountered the police, who were armed with tear gas and submachine guns. The Montgomery police ultimately took more than 30 students and a faculty member into custody.

The advertisement's description of the harassment of Dr. King was also slightly inaccurate. King was arrested four times, not seven, and it is not clear that he was ever assaulted by the police. King's home was bombed in 1956, right after he began leading the Montgomery bus boycott, but his wife and infant son were unharmed. Another attempt to bomb King's home was made in 1957, but the bomb failed to go off, and no member of the King family was in the house at the time. Although the inaccuracies in the advertisement were relatively minor, they opened the door to a defamation lawsuit.

The advertisement initially escaped the notice of most Alabamians. Then, a week after it was published, Ray Jenkins, the city editor for the *Alabama Journal*, spotted it while reading back issues of the *Times* during his lunch hour. Jenkins immediately typed up an article summarizing the advertisement and noted that it contained at least one factual misstatement. Grover Hall, the editor-in-chief of the *Montgomery Advertiser*, saw Jenkins's article, reviewed a copy of the advertisement, and wrote an editorial in his own paper attacking it. "There are voluntary liars, there are involuntary liars," Hall declared. "Both kinds of liars contributed to the crude slanders against Montgomery broadcast in a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* March 29." Hall showed the advertisement to Calvin Whitesell, an attorney in Montgomery who had previously represented the city and city officials, and told him to "take [the article] down and show it to City Hall" because it "libeled every one of them."

AT THE TIME, L. B. SULLIVAN WAS THE PUBLIC HEALTH and public safety commissioner. He did not read the *New York Times* and did not learn about the advertisement until Whitesell showed it to him. Sullivan's jurisdiction included the supervision of not only the police department but also the fire, scales, and cemeteries departments. That is to say, the various department heads reported to him. Sullivan's prior campaign platforms had clearly embraced a commit-

ment to continued segregation, and he was harshly critical of the demonstrators in Montgomery.

On April 8, Sullivan sent a retraction letter to the *New York Times* and the Reverends Abernathy, Shuttlesworth, Seay, and Lowery. By joining the four Alabama ministers as defendants in the case, he effectively prevented the *Times* from removing the case to federal court. None of the ministers responded to the demand letter; they took the position that they had nothing to retract because they had never authorized the advertisement in the first place.

The *Times* did not publish a retraction or an apology. It wrote a letter to Sullivan dated April 15, 1960, asking him to clarify his claim: "We have been investigating the matter, and are somewhat puzzled as to how you think the statements in any way reflect on you." Sullivan did not respond directly. On April 19, 1960, his lawyers filed a lawsuit in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County against the *New York Times* and the four ministers. Sullivan did not claim that he suffered any actual pecuniary damages as a result of the advertisement. Instead, he sought presumed damages, which do not require proof of actual damages and are permitted in some libel actions because reputational damages are hard to prove. Given that they had no actual damages on

which to base their damage claim, it is perhaps not surprising that Sullivan's lawyers had disagreed about how much to seek in damages in the complaint. One lawyer wanted to ask for \$1 million; another wanted to ask for \$100,000. They compromised at \$500,000. Five other Alabama officials instituted similar libel actions based on the same advertisement. In all, the *New York Times* and the four ministers faced \$3 million in potential damages arising out of the publication of the advertisement.

The *Times* was also facing other libel lawsuits challenging its reporting. *Times* reporter Harrison E. Salisbury had written a series of articles about racial conditions in Birmingham, Alabama, reporting that Birmingham officials had held civil rights activists incommunicado for days, ignored bombing attacks on black churches, black homes, and Jewish synagogues, and engaged in wiretapping and mail interception. As in Montgomery, the local Birmingham paper attacked the *Times*, publishing a front-page story with the headline, "New York Times Slanders Our City—Can This Be Birmingham?" and an editorial complaining that the *Times's* reporting was "maliciously bigoted, noxiously false, viciously distorted." Seven Birmingham officials brought libel suits against the *Times* and Salisbury seeking a total



Sullivan (second from right) with his attorneys on November 3, 1960, after winning his libel suit against the *Times* in Judge Jones's court



Center, left to right: Fred L. Shuttlesworth, Ralph Abernathy, and Martin Luther King Jr. in Birmingham, Alabama, on May 15, 1963

of \$3.15 million in damages. In addition, Salisbury was indicted on 42 counts of criminal libel. The *Times* was more concerned about the Salisbury cases than the *Sullivan* case; after all, the *Sullivan* case concerned an advertisement by third parties.

There is no doubt that southern officials were hoping to use libel law to curb press coverage of the civil rights movement. By 1964, media outlets ranging from the Associated Press and CBS to the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Ladies Home Journal* were facing almost \$300 million in potential libel damages in southern states. In September 1960, the *Montgomery Advertiser* published the headline "State Finds Formidable Legal Club to Swing at Out-of-State Press."

The *Sullivan* case went to trial on November 1, 1960. The judge, Walter B. Jones, was an ardent segregationist and white supremacist. In one of his weekly columns for the *Montgomery Advertiser* published two years afterward, he attacked the "hundreds of newspapers and magazines published in the North" that were "libeling the white race and doing their best to reduce it to the level of inferior races." He said that "columnists and photographers have been sent to the South to take back to the people of the North untrue and slanted tales."

For a long time, the lawyers for the *Times* thought the

best way to defeat *Sullivan*'s lawsuit was on personal jurisdiction grounds. The *Times* argued that its tiny circulation in Alabama—394 copies out of a national daily circulation of 650,000—was insufficient to subject it to personal jurisdiction in that state. As one commentator put it, in the Alabama market, the *Times* was "a small, dissident publisher of unpopular viewpoints." So invested was the *Times* in its jurisdictional argument that for two-and-a-half years after *Sullivan* filed suit, no *Times* reporter or stringer was permitted to set foot in Alabama. Ironically, this approach ended up crippling the paper's ability to cover the civil rights movement and thereby gave the Alabama officials, for a time, at least, exactly what they wanted. In any event, Judge Jones ultimately rejected the paper's argument, holding that the *Times* had sufficient minimum contacts in the state.

The case proceeded to a jury trial, and the atmosphere in the courtroom reflected the prejudice within the state. The courtroom was racially segregated. When one of *Sullivan*'s lawyers, Calvin Whitesell, read the text of the advertisement to the jury, he repeatedly substituted the word "nigger" for "Negro." When the lawyer for the ministers protested, Whitesell explained that he was simply using the pronunciation of the word "Negro" that he had grown up with. In the transcript, the stenographer referred to the white lawyers as

"Mr. Nachman" and "Mr. Embry," but referred to black lawyers as "Lawyer Gray" and "Lawyer Crawford." From the bench, Judge Jones also refused to use the honorific "Mr." to refer to the black lawyers. The trial took place during a Centennial Celebration commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Confederacy. Incredibly, Judge Jones allowed some jurors to sit in the jury box wearing Confederate uniforms, which included pistols and holsters; a Confederate flag was placed behind the bench.

Because Judge Jones had already determined that the advertisement was libelous, he told the jury that it needed to decide only whether the statements were "of and concerning" Sullivan and, if so, what his damages should be. The jury was also instructed that it could award punitive damages if it found that the publication was made with malice. Judge Jones rejected the defendants' request for special verdicts. This meant that the jury was not required to indicate which of the challenged statements was "of and concerning" the plaintiff; rather, the jury was asked simply whether the statements in general referred to him.

On November 3, 1960, the jury deliberated for a little more than two hours before returning a \$500,000 verdict in favor of Sullivan. The Alabama Supreme Court affirmed the decision on August 30, 1962.

On March 9, 1964, the Supreme Court voted unanimously to reverse and remand the decision of the Alabama Supreme Court. Justice Brennan wrote the majority opinion, which was joined by five other justices. In it, Brennan famously declared, "[W]e consider this case against the background of a profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open, and that it may well include vehement, caustic, and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials." Given this commitment, Brennan said, the key question was whether the statements at issue in *Sullivan* had lost First Amendment protection because they were false and allegedly defamatory.

Brennan rejected the argument that only truthful speech was entitled to constitutional protection. He expressed concern that holding speakers strictly liable for any factual errors would have a chilling effect on political dialogue, because "erroneous statement is inevitable in free debate." He concluded that protecting false speech is essential to protecting vigorous public debate, because otherwise speakers' fears of liability would cause them to "steer far wide of the unlawful zone."

Given his strong words, one might have expected Brennan to conclude that libelous statements concerning the public duties of government officials were entitled to absolute immunity. Instead, he created a conditional privilege for false defamatory statements. The privilege is lost if the statements were made with "actual malice"—if the

speaker was engaged in a "calculated falsehood" knowing the statements were false, or if the speaker was recklessly indifferent to their truth or falsity. Brennan drew the actual malice standard from the common law of libel in a minority of states. He specifically cited with approval a case from the Supreme Court of Kansas—introduced in an amicus brief by the American Civil Liberties Union—that adopted an actual malice standard as a way of offering broad protection for political discussions.

IT IS HARD TO SAY WHETHER PUBLIC DEBATE WOULD be any less vigorous today if the Court had not decided *Sullivan* the way it did. To be sure, the case helped the press play an important role in the success of the civil rights movement. Andrew Young, a close personal assistant to Martin Luther King Jr., said that the *Sullivan* case was important to him because the press "was essential to the conduct of non-violent demonstrations. . . . It was no accident that our demonstrations were always in the morning; that we completed them by two o'clock in the afternoon so that we could make the evening news; and so that reporters could file their deadlines for the coming day." Without the protection from libel suits that *Sullivan* afforded, the *New York Times* and other national publications would not have been able to provide the extensive coverage of the movement that was so integral to its success.

For almost 50 years, *Sullivan*'s commitment to "uninhibited, robust, and wide-open" public debate has had a deep impact on the Court's First Amendment canon. Subsequent decisions by the Court to protect hate speech, lewd and vulgar expression, incitement, sexually explicit expression, and other forms of offensive speech can all be traced back to this landmark case.

The *New York Times* did not expect to end up before the Supreme Court when it agreed to print an advertisement for the defense fund of Martin Luther King Jr. And when it appealed the verdict in the *Sullivan* libel suit to the Supreme Court, it was most concerned about protecting its ability to report on the civil rights movement. The *Times* prevailed, but *Sullivan* has not merely served to protect vigorous reporting during times of great social change. It has also served as the foundation for this country's firm commitment to the freedom of speech, even when it is speech that we hate. ■

Mary-Rose Papandrea is an associate professor at Boston College Law School who has written on the First Amendment as it relates to national security, intellectual property, and the electronic media, among other themes. Her essay is drawn and adapted with permission from a chapter she contributed to *First Amendment Stories* (copyright © 2011 by Thomson Reuters/Foundation Press), edited by Richard W. Garnett and Andrew Koppelman. The book is available at a discount from the Boston College Bookstore via www.bc.edu/bcm.

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Instruction plan

By Thomas H. Groome

How to hand on the faith in the 21st century?

Answer: Teach as Jesus did

THE BRILLIANT SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER Charles Taylor has explained how the Western world once presented sociocultural conditions—what could be described as a strong corporate identity—that favored religious belief. The village required all to believe. A nonbeliever might bring the wrath of God on everyone. Atheism was unknown, except among elites. Up until about 1800, faith in God and the belief in a spiritual realm pervaded daily life.

Ours is a secular age, as Taylor says, in which sociocultural conditions actively discourage faith. The culture we inhabit today celebrates self-sufficiency. Religion is no longer counted on to keep evil forces at bay or to lend legitimacy to civil authority. Insofar as most people advert to God at all, they are likely to do so in the form of

a “therapeutic deism” (the term coined by Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton in their 2005 book, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*), in which God is not unlike Santa Claus. Even within Christian churches that seem to have some success in retaining their youth, research indicates that young people often embrace a “nice guy” image of God, who comforts and consoles, can be called upon as needed, and makes no demands on their daily lives except that they, too, be nice.

To be sure, there are some strong restorationist sentiments among Catholics. In religious education, the sentiment is loud (more than large) to “just teach the catechism” or some such doctrinaire presentation of the faith. Many imagine that returning to the memorized question-and-



Schoolchildren at a Mass in Boston, October 22, 2006

answer format that dominated Catholic catechesis for some 400 years will infuse young people with a faith commitment. Certainly, there is a place for memorizing core prayers, Scripture, formulas of faith, and moral codes. But regressing to a Q&A catechism—or to any doctrinaire didactic of Christian faith—will only leave us worse off. What is urgently needed is an approach to religious education that is effective in the context of our time.

THE DAY WAS WHEN THE WORLD'S great religions were identifiable with geographic areas where they abided entwined with local cultures. Trends in communication, transportation, and migration have changed that. Now the ashram and mosque that were once "over there" are on the same block as the local church and

synagogue. Throughout the 20th century, we assumed that economics was the fault line in and among societies (socialism or communism versus capitalism). Now the public variable with the most political and social import seems to be religion. And all the great religions have the capacity to promote both life and death, love and hate, peace and war. So much depends on how and to what end we teach them.

People need to be educated in their own faith traditions *and* to be encouraged toward interreligious understanding and respect. As Jesus reminded, "In my Father's house, there are many dwelling places" (John 14:2). The first responsibility of religious educators is to form people in their own particular tradition, in a way that enables them to embrace the universality of God's love.

Rote memorization of doctrine won't achieve this, but there is an approach that I believe will: I call it the life-to-faith-to-life approach. It involves inviting people to bring their lives to their faith, and their faith to their lives. It is the way Jesus taught.

Whether crafting a formal lesson, facilitating a faith-sharing group, or carrying on the conversation of faith in the home, religious education must begin with an issue of real interest and relevance to participants' lives. It should seize on what the late educator Paulo Freire called a "generative theme," that is, a concern sufficiently pressing to engage people in learning. The subject might be friendship, say, or the burdens we carry. After reflection and conversation on this topic, participants need to have ready and persuasive access

to the relevant Scriptures and traditions of their faith, raising up the life-flourishing truths and spiritual wisdom of their heritage. Then the dynamic must move back to life again, inviting participants to take and make these truths and this wisdom their own, to appropriate the faith into their lives and make decisions in its light.

All the disenchantment of our age will not obliterate the innate human disposition toward the spiritual or the religious. The 17th-century French scholar Blaise Pascal summarized it well: "There is a God-shaped hollow in the human heart

that nothing else can fill." This is what impels communities of religion to hand on their faith to the rising generations. ■

Thomas H. Groome is chair of the department of religious education and pastoral ministry at Boston College's School of Theology and Ministry and the author of *Reclaiming Catholicism: Treasures Old and New* (2010). His essay is drawn and adapted by permission of Harper Collins from *Will There Be Faith? A New Vision for Educating and Growing Disciples* (copyright © 2011 by Thomas H. Groome). The book may be ordered at a discount from the Boston College Bookstore via www.bc.edu/bcm.

In country

By Kwok Pui-lan

The conversation that is Chinese Christianity

ERECTED IN 781 CE, THE NESTORIAN monument in Xian provides the earliest evidence of Christianity in China. The nine-foot-tall stone tablet, located in east-central China, records the arrival of missionaries from the East Syrian Church in 635 to spread what was called "the Luminous Religion" (*jing jiao*). One hundred twenty-eight priests had their names etched in the stone, together with a text that shows a high degree of cultural adaptation, using Daoist and Buddhist terminologies drawn from the religious traditions of eighth-century China.

The text summarizes the essentials of the Christian message, covering the Creation, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and baptism into the Church. It is worth noting that there is no mention of Christ's bloody sacrifice on the cross—the act of redemption—probably because blood sacrifice was an alien concept difficult for the Chinese to understand. (Centuries later, one Protestant missionary would translate Jesus's redemptive nature as being like medicine, good for the people's ills.)

Concerning the work of Christ, the monument's text says this:

He instituted the rule of the eight stations, purifying the stains and perfecting the truth; he opened the door for the three constants, giving access to life and destroying death.

In the ninth century, when the Chinese emperor turned against Buddhism, Christianity was banned not only because it, too, was a foreign intruder but also because, in its religious language and its monastic form, it appeared close to Buddhism.

When Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and other Jesuits arrived in the 16th century, they initially dressed in the saffron robes of Buddhist priests. They later changed their attire to that of the scholarly class, when they heard that Buddhist priests were not respected. Ricci wanted to appeal to the Confucian literati. He learned Chinese and the classics and won the respect of the emperor and the official class because of his respect for Chinese customs and culture and his knowledge of mathematics, the Western calendar, and clock making. In his treatise *The True*

Meaning of the Lord of Heaven, he argued that Confucianism and Christianity were very similar. He found the ideas of *tian* (Heaven) and *zhu* (Lord) in the Chinese classics and used them to translate the Christian term "God" as *Tianzhu* (Lord of Heaven). He saw no problem with presenting Christianity in Chinese garb.

Unlike the Franciscans and the Dominicans in China, Ricci supported the Chinese practice of veneration for ancestors. This led to what has been called the "Chinese Rites Controversy," with Ricci, and the Jesuits who followed in China, emphasizing the practice's social qualities over its religious aspects, and the Franciscans and Dominicans arguing that the Jesuits had gone too far in their cultural adaptation. In 1715, Pope Clement XI ruled against the Jesuits' viewpoint, declaring, "Such a ritual is heathen in nature regardless of the circumstances." The Rites Controversy resulted in the expulsion of Catholic missionaries from China by the emperor. It created tensions between the Vatican and Chinese governments that continue today (exemplified by the issue of independent election of Chinese bishops without Vatican approval).

When Protestant missionaries arrived in China in the 19th century, they worked among the lower classes and adapted their methods to popular religious practices. The Buddhists distributed religious tracts to propagate their beliefs, and so the early Protestant missionaries followed suit, translating portions of the Bible and writing simple homilies to be handed out in the markets and other public spaces. Seeing that women were able to teach and assist in rituals in Chinese popular tradition, the missionaries employed "Bible women" to assist them in teaching women and children to read.

In sum, in order to get its message across, Christianity had to adapt to the "codes" of the culture, as Robert Schreiter writes in his *Constructing Local Theologies* (1985). Asian Christianity has always been a hybrid. And interreligious encounter, if not dialogue as we understand the term today, has shaped the Chinese interpretation of Christian doctrine, as well as Chinese forms of Christian monasticism, leadership, and religious and communal life. In the Chinese Protestant Bible, the



A 1914 painting from a Jesuit orphanage in Xujiahui shows Matteo Ricci, SJ, in Ming garb.

prologue in the Gospel of John begins this way: "In the beginning was the *dao*, and the *dao* was with God, and the *dao* was God." The Chinese Bible also uses many Buddhist terms, including those for heaven and hell. Reading it, one is introduced to an inter-spiritual world, whether one is conscious of this or not.

It is because Asian Christians have this hybrid identity and experience of more than one religious tradition that some of the most prominent writers on interreligious dialogue, including Aloysius Pieris, Stanley Samartha, Peter Phan, and the late Raimon Panikkar, come from an Asian background. They have been in the vanguard of the effort, because they are accustomed to "being religious interreligiously," as Phan, a professor of Catholic social thought at Georgetown University, put

it in the title of his 2004 book on Asian understandings of interfaith dialogue.

Lest anyone think that this way of being Christian happens only in Asia or in Africa, I hasten to note that it is also taking place to a certain extent in the United

States. We all know white, middle-class, mainstream Christians who have tried Tai Chi, Zen Buddhist meditation, yoga, and other Eastern forms of spiritual healing. Inter-spirituality and multiple belongings can also be found within the racial and ethnic minority Christian churches. In *The Next Evangelicalism* (2009), Soong-Chan Rah observes that the fastest-growing Evangelical churches in America are the minority churches. Here different cultures, festivals, and customs come together, and new immigrants find a place for negotiating their identity.

With the U.S. Census Bureau projecting that in 2050 the country's population will be 30 percent Hispanic (up from 12.6 percent in 2000), 9.2 percent Asian (up from 3.8 percent), and 15 percent black (up from 12.7 percent), it may be too early now to tell what American Christianity will become. (Hispanics already make up about 40 percent of U.S. Catholics.) If we focus on the sanctioned teachings of established denominations, Christianity may appear to change rather slowly. If we look at the periphery, we will see a lot of vitality and creativity. ■

Kwok Pui-lan is the William F. Cole Professor of Christian Theology and Spirituality at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her essay is drawn and adapted from remarks she delivered on September 22 as part of a symposium titled "Cultural Identity and Interreligious Dialogue" sponsored by Boston College's theology department, School of Theology and Ministry, and Church in the 21st Century Center.



View talks on interreligious dialogue by Kwok Pui-lan and others at Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.

Coming attraction

On December 1, James Martin, SJ, will deliver the annual Advent talk sponsored by the Boston College Alumni Association and the Church in the 21st Century Center. His topic will be "Between Heaven and Mirth: Joy, Humor, and Laughter in the Spiritual Life," which is also the subject of his new book. Fr. Martin is the culture editor for *America* magazine and has been a guest on National Public Radio's *Fresh Air* with Terry Gross, the *Colbert Report*, and the *O'Reilly Factor*, to name a few venues.

Registration is requested (at www.bc.edu/alummed). The talk, which is free, will begin at 6:30 p.m. in Robsham Theater and will be made available for viewing within two weeks on the C21 website, www.bc.edu/church21.

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From the Burns Library

At the age of 19, William Butler Yeats wrote his first play, a tragedy. The year was 1884; he titled the drama *Love and Death* and set it in the 12th century. The future Nobel laureate penned the work in five scuffed, cloth-bound notebooks (below), and it remained unpublished. These volumes, with their doodles and stray math calculations, were purchased by the University in 1993 from Yeats's son Michael and recently issued online by the Boston College libraries, as part of an ongoing effort to make noteworthy holdings available to the public. They may be viewed at bc.edu/loveanddeath.





A promotional image for *Man on Wire*, the film about Philippe Petit's quest to cross between the World Trade Center towers in 1974

HEAD FIRST

By Colum McCann

A defense of optimism

WHEN I WAS 21 YEARS OLD, NOT TOO MUCH OLDER than you are now, I arrived in Boston from Dublin. I went out to Cape Cod and drove a taxicab in Hyannis. Later, I took off on a bicycle across the United States, and I entered that vast democracy of stories and storytelling.

People would talk to me, and I learned where I was, and I began to know who they were. And I realized that I was in a country of accumulating voices. All the voices I had met were meeting other voices in a sometimes graceful, sometime discordant way. A music.

I began realizing that I, too, was an amalgamation of so many voices. I grew up in Christian Brothers schools in Ireland. I got my voice from Brother Kelly, and from Mr. O'Connell, and from Mr. Hill, who rattled the school gates with his broken heart when he was forced into an early retirement. All my teachers voiced me in some way or other. I got a clip on the ear every now and then, too. I got my voice from that, as well.

Teachers gave to me the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God. . . . There lives the dearest freshness deep down things."

Hopkins was a man who, to me—reading him at the age of 15 and 16—was made even greater by his doubts. I found rapture in the moral, down-to-earth poetry of Patrick Kavanagh and Wilfred Owen ("foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were"). Much of what I was lucky to become came from the generosity of others—so many voices, my father, my mother, my brothers and sister. We all get our voices from others.

My faith allowed me to be open to the world. My family, my fellow students, and I, we were small radios looking for our antennae. And I feel today that I'm a small radio, looking for the music of what you are going to bring to the world.

You young people are perhaps the first 9/11 generation. The 10th anniversary of the twin towers' destruction intersects with

your first year of college. You and your generation will take what has happened in New York, in Baghdad, in London, in Madrid, in Kabul, and make of it, if not a peace, at least a pact. And if not stop it, at least push against it—if not to eradicate it, then at least to change it.

I walked around the labyrinth on the lawn of the Burns Library today, the path dedicated to the memory of Boston College alumni lost on 9/11. It's one of the most beautiful symbols I've come across. It speaks to who we are and where we come from and how we learn from experience. The labyrinth constitutes the longest possible way to arrive at the center, and there's no better way to talk about life. You can't rush it. You must submit to it and learn from its intimate geography.

Much of what I wanted to do with my novel *Let the Great World Spin* was to find value and grace and meaning and, I hope, recovery, in the ongoing thrum of the world. While much of the book may seem to be about a tightrope walk across the space between the World Trade Center towers, the real core of the book is the intersection of the tiny tightropes that we all walk, sometimes a foot off the ground, sometimes a quarter of a mile in the sky. Eventually, the book is about the rescue of two small children in a housing complex in the Bronx, two tiny towers that are ultimately huge, the small, intimate towers of our lives.

I want to read a passage from the book, about the character Corrigan, an Irish monk who pledges his life to the intimate dramas of others. This is his brother talking:

Corrigan told me once that Christ was quite easy to understand. He went where He was supposed to go. He stayed where He was needed. He took little or nothing along, a pair of sandals, a bit of a shirt, a few odds and ends to stave off the loneliness. He never rejected the world. If He had rejected it, He would have been rejecting mystery. And if He rejected mystery, He would have been rejecting faith.

What Corrigan wanted was a fully believable God, one you could find in the grime of the everyday. The comfort he got from the hard, cold truth—the filth, the war, the poverty—was that life could be capable of small beauties. He wasn't interested in the glorious tales of the afterlife or the notions of a honey-soaked heaven. To him that was a dressing room for hell. Rather, he consoled himself with the fact that, in the real world, when he looked closely into the darkness, he might find the presence of a light, damaged and bruised, but a little light all the same. He wanted, quite simply, for the world to be a better place, and he was in the habit of hoping for it. Out of that came some sort of triumph that went beyond theological proof, a cause for optimism against all the evidence.

"Someday the meek might actually want it," he said.

There are times when we are called upon to engage with the darkness. This is relevant to all of you, and it's relevant to your university education, which fits into a pattern of vision, justice, and

charity. It's very hard, as Yeats said, to "hold in a single thought reality and justice." But every little corner is a world, and you are called upon to go into the smaller, darker, more anonymous corners. Your faith comes into play here. It's only good when it's truly being tested. I've sometimes had my faith tested. You go with it, and you gain from it, and you stay with the voices you trust. These things last. Hope lasts.

There's a degraded discourse around the notion of optimism these days that says there is something soft about being an optimist—something wrong. It claims that optimism has no edge, as if it's less than complete, less than the full deck of knowledge. The

A good optimist never denies the reality of the dark.
Optimists have to examine the world.
They have to go headfirst into the dark. That is what
learning is about. Cynics do not go forth.

optimist is cartooned into the corner with an idiotic grin. I submit to you that none of that is true.

A good optimist never denies the reality of the dark. In fact, optimists are far more cynical than the best of cynics. They have to trump the cynic within. They have to examine the world. They have to go headfirst into the dark.

That is what learning is about. Cynics do not go forth. Cynics are trapped in their cynicism. It's the end of the journey. They all fall down.

So much of good education is learning how to get to the other side of cynicism, how to cross that towering divide. This is *not*, I submit, sentimental. It's full of sentiment, yes, but not sentimental. The best theologians, thinkers, philosophers, the best teachers, have always told us that we get to the light through the heart of the dark. You read, you engage. You become who you are by telling each other your stories. The bloodstream of the stories becomes the bloodstream of your life.

Still, our redemption doesn't consist of words but of acts. The art of learning is the art of learning how to do, and the art of learning how to do is the art of learning how to change, not only yourself, but the things that are around you.

And let's not fool ourselves. There's a lot to change. You have heard the sound of those jetliners smashing into buildings, and listened to how it turned the word "justice" into "revenge." You look at the robber barons who are back out on our streets, and at the destruction of our environment, the cheapening of our politics. There are more poor people in this country than at any time in the last 30 years.

I could become a good cynic and continue to rattle off what is wrong, but I'm a better cynic. I'm an optimist. I want to see the pressure that you will bring to bear on your government, the pressure that you'll bring to bear on your Church, on yourself, on your University, on your teachers. You won't do this by putting a smiley

face on your Facebook page. Do I advocate rage? Yeah, a little bit of rage. But I advocate it as an act of hope.

I love the way that you lit those candles this evening, and everyone said to you, go forth and set the world aflame. But the fact of the matter is, it's not going to be easy the whole time. Where you're about to go is just about the most exciting place on the planet. I wish I were in your place. New challenges, new cultures, new ideas, new temptations—you're about to go into doubt and joy and loss and learning and failure.

Failure? Did I say failure? So many times we are told how previous generations have failed us in some way. And they *have* failed us. The fact of the matter is I've failed you, your teachers have failed you, and the very best amongst you will fail, very well. And I'm happy about that, because failure is vivifying. Failure means you've tried something. Failure means that there's something more to beat. The great Sam Beckett said, "No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." That's the sort of failure that makes you and your folks proud.

If you can make the darkness visible, then you can make the light visible. So I call on you to practice resuscitation. Endure the rough weather. In fact, embrace it. Do not tread water. If you tread water, you might survive, but you won't live. Swim in the waters that other people would drown in. Get ripped to pieces and learn to put yourself back together again.

Throw away the GPS. Read. Be like Job, and ask questions. Turn answers into more questions. Push the edge, become the

edge. Expose your heart. Imagine yourself into the lives of those who do not have your advantages. Raise your voice on behalf of those who haven't had a chance to raise their own. A long life isn't good enough, but a good life is long enough.

Remind yourself every day how incredibly fortunate you are to be at this University. Bear your portion of the weight of the world. Embrace mystery. Call on difficulty for the sake of beauty. Have your mind work in tandem with your heart. And have a good time. Have a laugh. Fall in love. Fall too far. Turn the water into wine, and live your life out loud—put big, wide speakers in the windows of your head.

Be suspicious of that which gives you too much consolation. If I give you too much consolation, be suspicious of me. These are rough times.

The fact of the matter is that I've been waiting for you. We've been waiting for you. Your mothers, your fathers, your brothers and sisters, your grandparents, their grandparents, they've been waiting for you. Come along. Write a great poem. Find a great cure. We've been waiting for you to break open the arts, the sciences. We will, I hope, make great advances in your hands. ■

Novelist Colum McCann is the author most recently of *Let the Great World Spin*, for which he received the 2009 National Book Award. His essay is drawn from his keynote talk at First Year Academic Convocation on September 15 in Conte Forum, addressed to the University's new class of freshmen.

BERNINI'S ASSISTANTS

By Franco Mormando

The genius and his discontents

CARDINAL SCIPIONE BORGHESI, A MAN KNOWN FOR HIS appetites, used to exclaim in a tone of mock lament that from the day Gian Lorenzo Bernini's trio of statues entered his home at the Villa Borghese, visitors ceased to be interested in any of the other countless treasures and delights at his sumptuous estate. The works he referred to were *Pluto and Proserpina* (also called *The Rape of Proserpina* or *Persephone*), *David*, and, above all, *Apollo and Daphne*. These three marble groups were all created for Scipione and all within just four short years, 1621–25, when Bernini was between the ages of 23 and 27.

Never before was marble so palpably alive. If Bernini had felt himself in competition with Michelangelo, dead some 60 years before these works were commenced—and he most certainly did—he now had proven himself a worthy peer with these statues, which today reside in the Galleria Borghese, Scipione's villa turned public museum. And had Bernini produced nothing else in his life but these statues they alone would have sufficed to ensure his distinction in the annals of Western sculpture. Bernini was an original

artistic genius, and a new age had dawned. The austere, cautious style in ecclesiastical art of the Counter-Reformation over the previous 50 years gave way to a bold, new style containing movement, light, emotion, and playfulness—in other words, the Baroque.

Still, one cannot help noting two disturbing ironies. The first is that some of the amazing virtuoso carving of the *Apollo and Daphne* was actually done by someone else, not Bernini, who nonetheless and always claimed the work as entirely his own. And second, these sublime works of art owe their existence to one of the sleaziest characters of Baroque Rome, in the figure of Cardinal Scipione, a man whose life was "utterly given over to pleasures," as the Venetian ambassador at the time reported. (Curiously, the marble in which Bernini first attempted to capture Scipione's likeness revolted and cracked open to expose a black gash through the cardinal's skull.) To varying degrees, these ironies held true through the rest of Bernini's brilliant career: on the one hand, the narcissistic habit of diminishing or denying the contributions of others to the design or execution of his art,



Detail of *Apollo and Daphne* (1622–25)

and, on the other, the pragmatic willingness to work serenely and amicably with and for any rich, powerful, cash-carrying patron, no matter his character.

IT WAS, AT THE TIME, PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE FOR MASTER sculptors to employ other sculptors who specialized in the carving of certain features, just as master painters executing a large, complex canvas would pay specialist painters to fill in, say, the architectural background or the natural landscape. It was also a matter of virtually unanimous opinion that, in the evaluation of a work of art, the master artist's *concetto*—his design—counted for far more than the technical execution of it. Patrons knew well that in the case of famous, busy artists—Bernini's older contemporary, Peter Paul Rubens, is a prominent example—the final product would inevitably represent a fair amount of workshop assistants' handiwork.

However, when Bernini produced the *Apollo and Daphne*, he was a young, only locally known sculptor at the beginning of his career. He was still proving himself, which meant he ought to have been doing the work on his own. Furthermore, in the case of the *Apollo and Daphne*—in which we witness the breathtaking moment of transformation of the beautiful woman into a laurel tree—we are not talking about small, incidental contributions. Instead, the carved portions at issue represent “the most astounding metamor-

phosis of all, the transformation of the hard and brittle marble into roots, twigs, and windswept hair,” in the words of the art historian Jennifer Montagu. These features are what audiences since 1625 have marveled over and what in 17th-century Rome caused master sculptors and laypeople alike to sing the highest praises of Bernini. In fact, these parts of the statue were executed by Giuliano Finelli, a Tuscan sculptor of enormous creative talent, three years younger than Bernini. Finelli, who helped carve other Bernini statues in the 1620s, is today recognized and praised as a master in his own right. Bernini never acknowledged his contributions.

Charming, paranoid, ingenious—Bernini was a man who guarded his interests. As a master, he paid his assistants fairly, but he hogged the credit. It is therefore not surprising that conflict would regularly inflame relations with his studio collaborators, including, later, Francesco Borromini, recognized as one of the great architects of Baroque Rome.

By 1629, Finelli had had enough. In disgust, he severed relations with Bernini forever. ■

Franco Mormando is associate professor of Italian at Boston College. His essay is drawn and adapted from his new book, *Bernini: His Life and His Rome*, published by the University of Chicago Press (copyright © 2011 by the University of Chicago. All rights reserved). The book may be ordered at a discount from the Boston College Bookstore via www.bc.edu/bcm.

Abstracts

Recent faculty writings

Home in the World: A Deontological Theory of the Right to be Adopted," published in the 2010–11 *New York Law School Law Review*. In particular, Barrozo takes issue with policies that, despite their "charitable sensibilities and human rights rhetoric," hinder international adoptions (a 2004 United Nations study reports no less than 16 million double orphans in Asia, Latin America, and Africa alone).

In an article principally devoted to theoretical foundations, Barrozo traces the history of adoption from ancient Rome, where the institution was used to enhance the social and financial status of a paterfamilias by combining estates; through William Blackstone's 18th-century codification of the rights of parents ("as a recompense for [their] care and trouble"); to the orphan trains of 19th- and early 20th-century America, which carried homeless children from eastern cities to farming communities short on help. It is no accident, Barrozo maintains, that mid 19th-century adoption records in Mississippi and Texas (the first states to establish registries) followed the format developed for entering property deeds. Adoption was a contract for the benefit of the adopter.

Post-World War II policies in the United States brought an increase in placements of disabled and minority children, but most international protocols still treat children as national, cultural, and ethnic resources. Barrozo cites the 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, which accords nations a "sovereign-like" ownership of unparented children and is concerned not with a child's right to be adopted but rather "with violations (e.g. abduction, sale, trafficking) of states' monopolistic dominion over their populations."

Identity check

Though Western news outlets from the *Economist* to the *New York Times* refer to the "Arab World" of the Middle East, in reality there is no such place, writes Franck Salameh, assistant professor of Near Eastern studies, in "Towards a New Ecology of Middle Eastern Identities," which appeared in the March 2011 issue of *Middle Eastern Studies*, even as the so-called Arab Spring was underway. The term, he says, reflects a "patently European" model in which "race, nationality, language, and territory run parallel." The Arab World, he says, is in fact a "patchwork of hybrid ethnicities, languages, and narratives."

Focusing on the Arabic language, "the prism through which to view and understand the whole of the multicultural, polyglot Middle East," Salameh notes that Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the public language of established religious and political leaders, is incomprehensible to more than half of the 300 million inhabitants of the Middle East, particularly the less educated and less affluent, many of them minorities. Most Middle Easterners communicate in regional variants of Arabic—some 30 in all—as distinct from one another as French is from English, so that a Cairene finds Algerians, Iraqis, and Moroccans virtually unintelligible.

Introduced to the region in the seventh century as the language of the Koran, Salameh writes, MSA today plays a role akin to that of Latin in 14th-century Italy (when Dante began composing in his native Tuscan). Like Latin, Arabic survives as an "administrative language," one that is "bound to the strictures of theology"; it is, says Salameh, "a pristine primordial idiom" that in the view of many in the Middle East, "must not be sullied with . . . trivialities." Increasingly, Salameh observes, writers and intellectuals in the region are employing their native or local vernaculars, which can accommodate the "settled life and information superhighways."

—Thomas Christopher

Thomas Christopher is a Connecticut-based writer.

Adoption, a birthright

Responsible and loving parents are not just a privilege, asserts assistant professor of law Paulo Barrozo; they are a child's fundamental right. Governments and institutions can satisfy a child's practical needs for shelter and food, but it is the care, protection, and affection parents supply that provide "the best environment for . . . the potentials with which a child was initially endowed," Barrozo writes in "Finding

Branded

Even if you never open a can of Red Bull, this sugar-and-caffeine-laced beverage delivers the stimulation its producers promise—"for better or worse," report S. Adam Brasel and James Gips in the January 2011 issue of the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. Brasel, an associate marketing professor, and Gips, the Egan Professor of Computer Science, found in an experiment that the mere sight of the energy drink's logo—two scarlet bulls poised to lock horns in front of a fiery sun—seems to instigate aggressive risk-taking. This effect does not derive from prior consumption of the product; the Red Bull brand has as powerful an effect on individuals who have never tasted the drink.

The experiment took the form of a video game in which 70 college student subjects each raced five virtual cars in individual time trials. Four of the cars sported the logo of a beverage company—Coca Cola, Guinness, Red Bull, or Tropicana. One car was unbranded. A questionnaire previously administered to a separate group of 33 students found familiarity with the four brands to be essentially equal and Red Bull to be associated with the characteristics of "fast," "powerful," "energetic," and "daring." The driving records reflected these perceptions. Though the virtual cars all had the same capabilities, the Red Bull car tended to finish the course with the best times—or with the worst times, as overly aggressive driving could cause the car to skid off the track. Red Bull, the researchers note, was "the only brand with a significantly uneven race speed distribution."

This experiment shows how "brand exposure can exert double-edged effects," write Brasel and Gips, who suggest that virtual brand exposure in the increasingly prevalent interactive world may have "especially powerful" effects on consumers.

LONG-TERM CARE

By Dave Denison

Helping children live with enduring illness

In summer 2010, the Connell School of Nursing (CSN) launched the country's first graduate nursing program in palliative care for children. The program was initiated by a CSN professor who specializes in geriatric studies and developed by an Arts and Sciences alumna 10 years out who went on to work as a nurse practitioner in a New York City hospital. Both women were drawn to the new field by an increasing need: With medical advances, children with serious diseases—from cystic fibrosis to cancers to HIV—are living longer. They and their families face physical, emotional, and social challenges that require specialized attention over months, often years.

The field of palliative care developed alongside the hospice movement in the 1970s. But, whereas hospice care is meant to ease suffering in the final months or weeks of a person's life, palliative care is intended to help patients live with chronic, sometimes fatal medical conditions. Hospice care often takes place in the home or in a dedicated center; palliative care is most often administered by hospitals and involves multidisciplinary teams. A child with leukemia, say, may see a pediatric psychologist, an oncology social worker, and a specialist in pain management. As children grow from infancy through adolescence, pediatric palliative caregivers must adapt to the changing developmental needs of their patients. Often it's an advanced-practice nurse who coordinates the team's efforts.

In 2006, CSN received a three-year, \$728,000 federal grant to create a curriculum in general palliative care among its master of science offerings. Associate dean for graduate programs Patricia Tabloski was named director of the project, and one of the first applicants was a nurse practitioner working in pediatrics. This surprised Tabloski. "I thought, Why would she be attracted to a course geared toward treating adult patients with terminal illness?" In conversations with the applicant it became apparent to Tabloski that palliative care must be adapted to patients "across the [age] spectrum."

When Tabloski applied for a three-year grant renewal in 2008, she proposed an additional program focusing on children. A grant for \$875,000 was approved in 2009 by the Health Resources and

Services Administration, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and shortly thereafter CSN hired Vanessa Battista '01 to help construct the pediatric palliative care curriculum. With an undergraduate major in psychology and an MS from Columbia University's nursing school, Battista had been working with patients of all ages suffering from neuromuscular diseases.

Consulting with pediatric specialists, many of them at Boston hospitals, Battista designed a program of three semester-long courses, which she teaches, and 750 hours of clinical experience at hospitals in Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. Given the newness of this specialty, the courses are taught largely through case studies and role-playing. Topics covered include differing cultural approaches to death and dying; ethical/legal issues related to serious illness; resource availability and fiscal issues; age-appropriate pain and symptom management; and the role of the nurse-leader in the interdisciplinary team.

A critical component of the program is the focus on developing strategies for communication, not only with parents but also with sick children and their siblings. In the past, Battista says, "people never talked to the kids." Students practice having "difficult conversations." They learn how to "fire warning shots" to prepare families for bad news. In this, Tabloski notes a similarity with geriatric nursing, where nurses often must deal with the larger family. The major difference, she says, is that most families find it easier to eventually accept the death of a loved one whose life has been long.

On October 7, some 130 nurses and other health care professionals convened in the Murray Room for a daylong regional conference on pediatric palliative care, sponsored by CSN. Several speakers, including Tabloski, made the point that palliative care does not mean giving up on curing illness. But rather than seeing death as a failure, Tabloski said, nurses should ask, "Did we do our job to make that a good death?"

Dave Denison is a Boston-based writer.





Salem at Edesia's Providence facility

Body builder

By Thomas Christopher

Plumpy'nut's Navyn Salem '94

It's the first week of September and Navyn Salem, like any mother of four, is juggling. The executive director of Edesia Global Nutrition Solutions, she'll be leaving work early to take a daughter to Brownies; her husband, Paul, a private equity financier, is in Dubai on business; and she's making meals for hungry children—7,000 an hour, 21 hours a day.

Those meals—sweet, peanut-based, fortified pastes packaged in foil packets that can be stored safely without refrigeration for up to 24 months—are distributed under the name Plumpy'nut, and they have been credited with near-miraculous results in treating severely malnourished children in 17 countries, from Sudan to Haiti. Before-and-after photographs on the walls of Edesia's Providence, Rhode Island, plant show skeletal infants transformed into thriving toddlers in four to six weeks.

Graduating with a major in communication, Salem later worked as a marketing executive at the online employment and advertising company Monster.com, ultimately heading a division. During a 2007 trip to her father's homeland of Tanzania, and by then a parent herself, she saw firsthand the effects of Plumpy'nut—which at the time was produced solely by a French

company called Nutriset—and its potential reach. "The need was just overwhelming," she recalls in passionate but carefully modulated tones.

She founded the nonprofit Edesia with seed money from her husband, a \$2-million USAID grant, and a licensing deal with Nutriset. Edesia's Rhode Island facility opened in March 2010, satisfying a U.S. law that requires domestic production of relief materials funded by USAID. Salem built her second factory in Tanzania, reasoning that Edesia could help create jobs and a market for the local peanut crop. The Tanzanian plant began operating in December 2010. Edesia's products are sold at cost, and the company is now "fully sustainable on sales alone," says Salem.

Ask Salem about a typical day, and she laughs. It could include a product development meeting (Edesia now also manufactures three nutritional supplements, including Plumpy'doz for the very young), sales calls to prospective clients such as the United Nations World Food Program, or networking at the annual meeting of a global aid group in New York. "There are always challenges," she says. "Just because you're feeding malnourished children, the world doesn't give you a free pass."

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ABOVE: First opened in 1913, Gasson Hall emerged brilliantly in September after an extensive exterior and interior renovation. Photograph by Gary Wayne Gilbert

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